The Middlebury Campus

VOL. CXVII, No. 13 | MIDDLEBURY, VERMONT, JANUARY 24, 2019 | MIDDLEBURYCAMPUS.COM

The Staff Issue

NICK GARBER, MICHAEL BORENSTEIN, SABINE POUX/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

Clockwise from top left: Facilities worker Nick Boise, Costume Shop Director Marcia Provoncha, Economics Department academic coordinator Amy Holbrook, Atwater I.D. checker and servery worker Christina Richmond.

Staff Cuts Loom as Workforce Planning Hits Critical Stage

By NICK GARBER
Managing Editor
SABINE POUX
Senior News Editor

The monthslong effort by Middlebury to shrink staff costs and reevaluate the way the institution does work is entering its most critical stage, and staff members report varying levels of satisfaction with the process as they wait for buyout offers to arrive in February.

The workforce planning process, announced by President Laurie L. Patton in a June email to college employees, began with the goal of shrinking staff compensation costs by 10 percent — about $8 million — by the end of the academic year. Now, administrators have reviewed proposals to reshape departments across the institution, and buyout offers will be sent to staff in early February. Involuntary layoffs remain a last resort, if not enough employees take buyouts by the end of the academic year.

Faculty, meanwhile, are undergoing a separate process of buyouts and retirement plans, as part of the same effort to reduce the college's deficit (See Page 8).

LEARNING FROM THE PAST

For several years, college officials have been open about the financial challenges that the institution is facing, with yearly operating expenses exceeding revenues since the 2013 fiscal year. Causes of the deficit include rising financial aid commitments, a flawed policy that capped annual tuition increases and an aborted venture into online language instruction.

The college has since lowered its deficit faster than initially projected, hoping to balance its budget by fiscal year 2021. But faculty and staff pay remains the institution's biggest expense, often making up about two-thirds of its annual spending.

This is not the first time that budgetary issues have prompted the college to rein in staff costs, and administrators are taking lessons from past mistakes. In 1991, college officials, led by then-President Timothy Light, abruptly fired 17 staff members, causing an uproar that made national news and brought about Light's resignation. And following the 2008-09 financial crisis, the college offered voluntary buyouts to any employee interested in taking one — an unstructured process that led to excessive loss of crucial staff positions, some of which needed to be restaffed shortly afterwards.

So when administrators realized a new wave of deficit reductions were needed, they took a more deliberate approach. "To do it in a really thoughtful way we needed to think about the work we do, and how we could staff

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Facing Low Wages, Some Employees Forced to Seek Work Elsewhere

By KENSHIN CHO
Local Editor

As the college continues its process of workforce planning and prepares to review its compensation policies, issues surrounding staff compensation garner renewed attention.

For years, members of the college community have called for changes to the staff pay structure, particularly around low-wage positions. They remain concerned over the ability of staff to afford the costs of living in and around Middlebury, and the inability of departments that rely on these positions to fill job openings.

Staff pay follows a multi-tiered scale organized under two wage structures. Structure A applies to most staff positions, while structure B applies to jobs with competitive market conditions and comes with higher hourly wages.

Both contain four career bands: administrator, management, specialist, and operations. These bands are then divided into levels based on the amount of responsibilities associated with the job. At each level, staff can be paid within a certain range, broken up into three with minimum and maximum values shown for every third.

Jobs are categorized into one of these levels and compensated accordingly. For example, a floor crew custodian is paid at an Operations Level 2 (OP2) rate, with a minimum of $11.00 per hour in the lower third and a maximum of $15.58 per hour in the upper third.

Approximately 15 percent of staff, including custodians and dining hall servers, are paid at the OP1 and OP2 levels, the lowest of the bands. As the costs of living increases, many of these employees are finding it increasingly difficult to work at the college.

"I do think that the pay is low. I really do," said a member of the custodial team. "It's not keeping up with the cost of living, so a lot of people here work two jobs. It's tough. Really tough," he said.

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Employee Dissatisfaction Widespread

Internal Review Shows College Lags Behind Peers

By BOCHU DING
News Editor

Results from a 2017 faculty and staff survey reveal that Middlebury lags well behind its peers in almost all measures of employee satisfaction. Most notably, faculty and staff gave low marks to communication within and between departments as well as confidence in senior leadership.

The consulting firm ModernThink, which has administered similar surveys for colleges and universities across the country, conducted the Middlebury survey in October 2017. 1,046 faculty and staff members across both the Vermont and Monterey campuses took part in the survey — a response rate of 68 percent.

The survey comprised 60 core belief statements included in all ModernThink surveys and seven custom statements provided by the college itself. Faculty and staff responded to each statement expressing their level of agreement on a spectrum from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree," creating 67 distinct indicators. For example, one indicator asked respondents to react to the statement: "Our review process accurately measures my job performance." Grouping responses to each statement into positive, neutral and negative categories, the report — if taken at face value — conveys an overall positive image of job satisfaction at Middlebury.

The Campus obtained the complete survey results, significant portions of which have not previously been released to the student body and general public. In particular, these fuller results include a benchmark that allows for comparison between Middlebury and other baccalaureate colleges that have been surveyed by ModernThink.

Administrators delivered key survey findings at a staff meeting in Dana Auditorium in January 2018, led by then-Interim Provost Jeff Cason, Vice President for Human Resources Karen Miller and ModernThink representative Richard Boyer. While the presentation disclosed Middlebury's low-performing areas, including perceptions of senior leadership and the effectiveness of communication structures, it juxtaposed Middlebury's results only with ModernThink's 2017 Honor Roll of small colleges and not with the national average for baccalaureate colleges.

The honor roll benchmark includes only the highest-performing schools surveyed by ModernThink, numbering nine total in 2017, including insti-

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A Morning With Head Baker Ashley LaDuke

By JAMES FINN
News Editor

Stroll into a dining hall to grab a sweet treat anytime between November and February, and you're likely to find an array of desserts meant to give a taste of wintertime in Vermont: maple mousse, maple-walnut brownies, maple cheesecake, and other treats featuring Vermonters' favorite winter flavor.

Using seasonal ingredients to liven up the dining halls' dessert selection is one of head college baker Ashley LaDuke's favorite strategies when it comes to keeping hungry students happy. But although the wintertime gives her plenty of opportunities to experiment with Vermont's signature flavor, her favorite season to be in the bake shop is the time when normal classes come to a close and language schools begin.

"The summer is by far my favorite season because I'm a huge berry fan," LaDuke said. "I'm a berry-holic. And It's very easy for us to get in tons of fresh blueberries, raspberries, strawberries and for me to play up lighter fare desserts that incorporate those fresh fruits."

Fall offers its own array of delectable seasonal ingredients, while winter presents the baking staff more of a challenge.

"If it's fall, I'm going to try to highlight things that are growing here at that time of year and are being harvested," she said. "Apples, pumpkins, squash, things of that nature. This time of year I'm trying to think more of warm, savory notes that I can fit into our desserts, focusing more on maple, chocolates, caramel, coffee, some flavors of that nature."

On days when she doesn't need to drop her daughter off at daycare, LaDuke's morning in the bake shop usually starts at around 5:00 a.m. -- an hour she describes as her favorite time of day. The early morning team in the bake shop, which is located below Proctor Dining Hall, usually consists of LaDuke and baker Peter Halpin, who has worked there for the past ten years (with 21 years' experience on the college's dining staff prior to that).

The pair begins their mornings by mixing bread dough for the day,

JAMES FINN/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

then moves on to making cake batter, garnishing pastries and scaling out dessert portions for lunch and dinner. They are joined later in the morning by two to three more bakers, one of whom is usually a student worker.

On a typical day in the college bake shop, LaDuke's team uses

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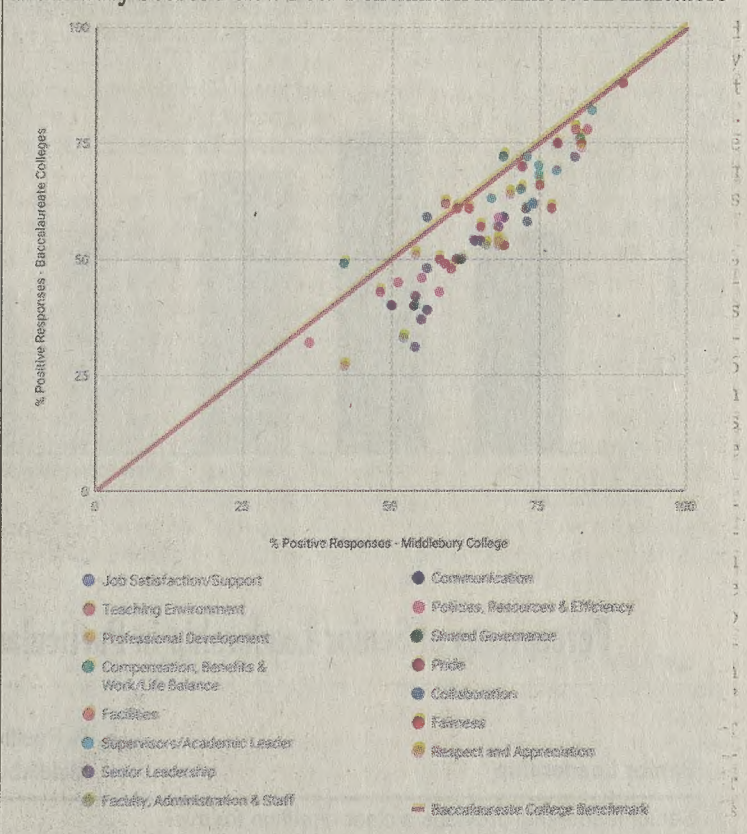
Middlebury Scores Below Peer Benchmark in Almost All Indicators



Breaking down the data into specific statements, the college fails to meet the national benchmark in each of the individual indicators. Each indicator is plotted with the Middlebury score on the x-axis and the benchmark score on the y-axis. Thus, the 45 degree line represents any point that reaches the benchmark value. Any point below the line represents an indicator not meeting the Baccalaureate average.

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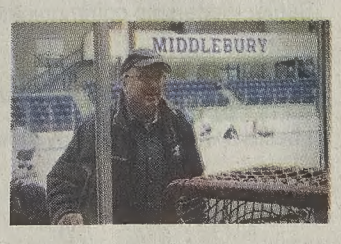

Rink managers discuss connection to hockey teams
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Staff Engagement Survey Reveals Substandard Job Satisfaction

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tutions such as Mississippi University for Women and New York Chiropractic College. In other words, the presentation exclusively contrasted Middlebury's performance with those of institutions with the very highest levels of staff satisfaction in the country while failing to disclose that Middlebury also consistently performed below the national average for colleges of its kind. Middlebury did not simply fail to reach the highest standard, it also fell short of the average benchmark.

Only five of the 60 core belief indicators met or exceeded Middlebury's peer group average, with 27 falling into the "Red Flag" and "Acute" classifications defined by ModernThink. "Acute" is a category of performance below "Red Flag," denoting positive response rates lower than 45%.

A college news release published several weeks after last year's presentation begins by stating that "a majority of faculty and staff have a positive overall working experience, value the sense of community engendered by Middlebury, enjoy a high degree of 'job fit,' and appreciate the flexibility and autonomy their jobs afford.'" The release does not discuss how Middlebury's results compare to the national averages.

Responding to the survey, the college has developed a four-pronged action plan that addresses the onboarding process for new hires, compensation, the Annual Performance Summary tool and performance management. It includes timelines for each of these areas, hoping to complete all of them by the fall of 2020.

According to Bill Burger, Middlebury's vice president for communications and chief marketing officer, the survey results have also informed how the administration has conducted the workforce planning process.

"It has certainly underscored the importance of communication on this, and I think we've made an effort to communicate more," he said. "Although my guess is you can never be sufficient in that — there will always be some people who feel they haven't been communicated to enough."

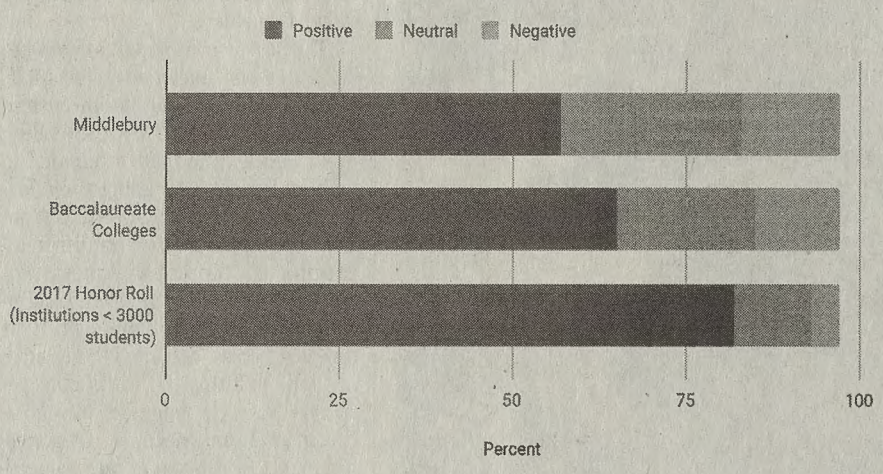
Burger said that Middlebury is also looking more closely at compensation rewards and incentives, in response to low scores in those categories.

"A lot of staff didn't feel there was appropriate recognition for work well-done and that work well-done wasn't rewarded appropriately in terms of compensation," Burger said. "So we hope that through this (workforce planning) process we will emerge so that we can be not locked into the annual 2 percent or 2.25 percent increase that goes to virtually everyone, but that we'll have more flexibility to reward people for a really exceptional performance."

Still, only 45 percent of respondents expressed confidence when asked if they expected senior leadership to take action based on the results of the survey.

"The administration does not seem to want to listen and they do not seem to care. If you say something it is held against you," said one staff member who asked to remain anonymous for fear of retribution. "You are underappreciated no matter what you do."

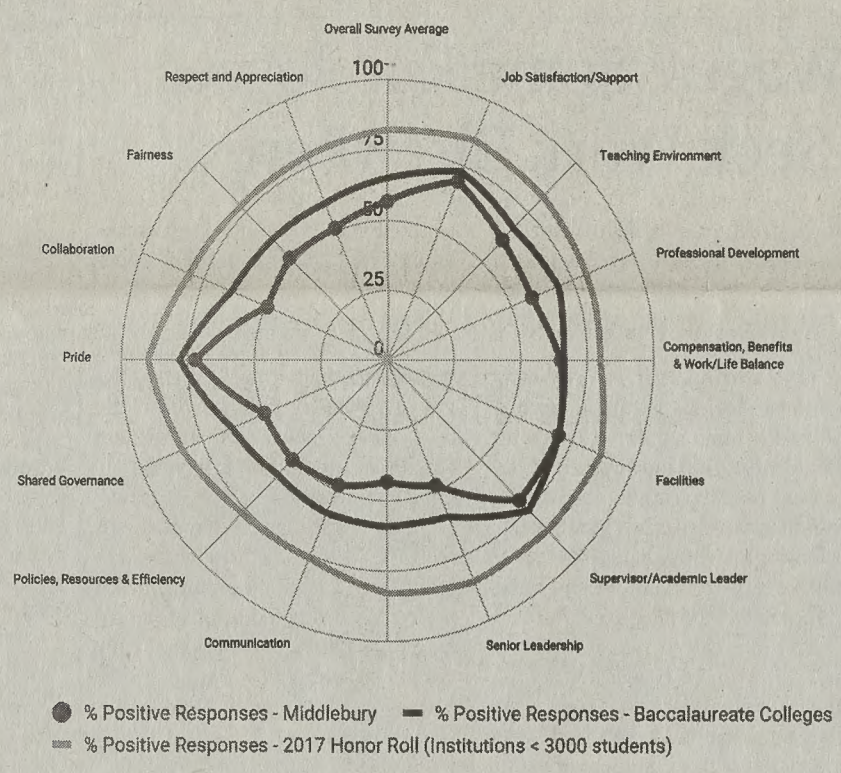
Middlebury Has Fewer Positive, More Negative Responses Than Peers and Honor Roll



In the Overall Survey Average, Middlebury performs below the average for Baccalaureate Colleges. 57 percent of responses were positive, 25 percent were neutral, and 14 percent were negative.

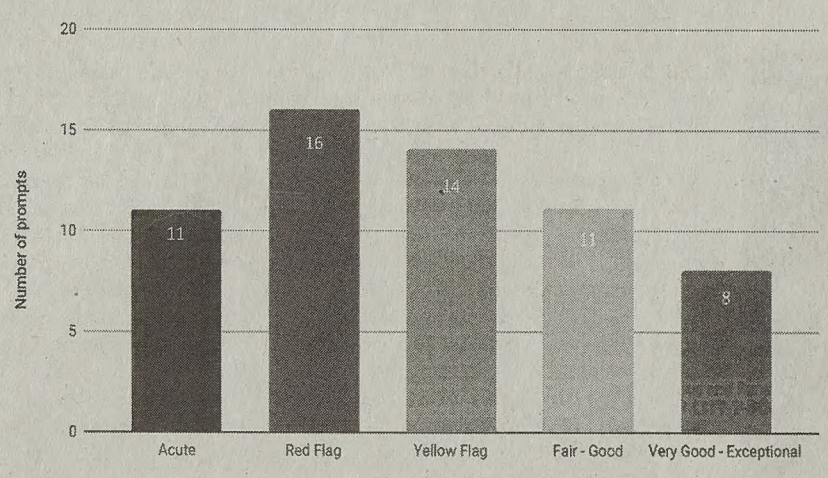
** The percentages do not add to 100 percent because of a "not applicable" option in the survey.*

Middlebury Lags Behind Peer and Honor Roll Benchmarks in All Category Averages



The survey also groups statements into categories. In each sectional average, Middlebury consistently falls below both its peer group and the Honor Roll benchmark.

Responses Overwhelmingly Correspond with "Acute" and "Red Flag" Categories



Many prompts fall into ModernThink's "Acute" and "Red Flag" standards, based on low percentages of positive responses. The "Acute" category denotes that fewer than 45% of responses were positive, while "Red Flag" denotes positivity for 45-54% of responses.

Perceptions of Senior Leadership in Particular Ranks Below Peers

Senior Leadership	% Positive - Middlebury	% Positive - Baccalaureate Colleges	% Positive - 2017 Honor Roll
Senior leadership provides a clear direction for this institution's future	37	55	82
Our senior leadership has the knowledge, skill and experience necessary for institutional success	54	65	88
Senior leadership shows a genuine interest in the well-being of faculty, administration, and staff	49	59	85
Senior leadership communicates openly about important matters	42	54	82
Senior leadership regularly models this institution values	57	68	90
I believe what I am told by senior leadership	50	61	86
Senior Leadership Average	48	60	85

Faculty and staff expressed a uniform lack of confidence in senior leadership. Only 45 percent of respondents gave positive feedback when asked if they expect senior leadership to take action based on the results of the survey. Morale remains low with workforce planning looming on the horizon. Only 39 percent of respondents expressed confidence in the institution moving forward as a whole.

Wake and Bake: A Day in the Life of A Dining Hall Baker

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up to 50 pounds of sugar and 75 pounds of flour in order to produce desserts for three dining halls and over 2,500 students. Her crew bakes bread in an oven that can hold up to 16 loaves at a time. For a pastry chef or baker, that scale is enormous; a 2010 graduate of the Culinary Institute of America, LaDuke noticed immediately upon arriving at Middlebury that working as head baker at a small college would bring a set of challenges that differ starkly from those of smaller-scale restaurant work.

"In restaurant life you're worried about producing enough desserts for, on a busy night, 150 to 200 people," LaDuke said. "To go from that level to now producing desserts daily for over 2000 students is definitely challenging...but it's been a great opportunity."

A native New Yorker, LaDuke worked as a pastry chef at Shelburne Farms beginning five years ago, then spent time at Bristol Bakery prior to earning the position of head baker at the college in June 2017. Though the scale of her work at Middlebury differentiates the college bake shop from her earlier jobs, she finds that the creative process involved in dessert making has been a common thread in her work, one that drew her to baking in the first place.

"I might have a little bit of ADD and I get bored very easily," she said. "I'm always looking to create something new, create something interesting, so I'm constantly researching when I'm in the office aside from just doing emails and things of that nature."

Interactions with the students since she began work at the college have been rewarding, LaDuke said. She pointed to improved student conduct in the dining halls after discussions around last year's 10 o'clock Ross fiasco as an example. One area in which students can continue to improve their relationship with the dining staff, she said, is feedback forms.

"We don't get as much feedback as I'd like, which makes it challenging because we don't necessarily know how well received the dessert was" LaDuke said. "I think if students took maybe a little more time to just let us know what we're doing right or not doing right, because at the end of the day we want to put things out that you guys enjoy."

Students can give the dining staff feedback on meal and dessert selections at go.middlebury.edu/dining?comment.

JAMES FINN/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

LaDuke's baking team uses up to 50 pounds of sugar and 75 pounds of flour everyday to make desserts for all three dining halls.

Two 'Meatless' Days Added to Dining Schedule

By PORTER BOWMAN
Staff Writer

There will be two additional meatless days per week in the college dining halls in an effort to reduce the college's meat consumption by 30 percent, according to an all-school email sent by the Student Government Association (SGA) on Jan. 15. In addition to Meatless Monday, which already takes place in Atwater dining hall, Ross Dining hall will go meatless on Wednesdays for lunch and Proctor dining hall will go meatless on Fridays for lunch. The step is meant to lower the dining halls' environmental impact, improve the health of students and save money that can be reverted to higher quality meats and local producers.

This initiative has been led by EatReal, a student organization that promotes more sustainable eating habits on campus, and the college's Environmental Affairs Committee and Sunday Night Environmental Group. These groups have been working with the college's dining services to reach at least a 20 percent reduction from 2017 data by the end of 2019.

The college's dining halls serve 1.5 times the amount of protein recommended per person per day by the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans, according to a 2016 EatReal survey. Based on these results, EatReal passed a bill in May 2017 to reduce meat consumption by 30 percent, in increments of 10 percent for each of the next three years. The bill passed unanimously in the SGA and with the support of 66.86 percent of surveyed students, as well as support from athletes and coaches on campus.

According to the bill, the first phase included a reduction in meat soups and salads, offering a plain meat option at every lunch and dinner, smaller pieces of meat in dishes to promote portion control and reduce consumption and more. Between 2017 and 2018, these changes contributed to a 7.95 percent reduction in meat and around $32,000 in savings.

The Jan. 15 email indicated that the second phase involves the additional meatless days in the dining hall. EatReal found that the Meatless Mondays initially reduced the numbers of students in the dining hall but that gradually the number of students has recovered and there has been limited negative feedback.

Some students still expressed concern in spite of these findings. While many students support the meat reduction initiative as a whole, some, like Nathaniel Blumenthal '21.5, remain skeptical about the implementation of this second phase.

"Ridding certain dining halls of meat on particular days may cause unforeseen congestion issues if students change their eating habits based on whether meat is being served in the dining hall," Blumenthal said.

Dan Detora, executive director of food service operations, remains hopeful, however, saying that he believes the college is moving in the right direction by considering the environmental impact of meat consumption on campus.

"Hopefully meat-eating students will at least try some of the very delicious vegetarian entrees," Detora said, although still maintaining that these changes will have minimal impacts on dining experiences.

Detora said in an interview with the Campus that the financial implications of these changes are still uncertain, however.

"Keep in mind that non-meat entrees can be just as expensive if not more than meat entrees," Detora said.

The SGA spoke to these some of these and some other student concerns in a second email sent to students on Jan. 20. In response to concerns of inconvenience, they wrote that the current phase only requires students to either eat a plant-based protein instead of protein once per week, eat a sandwich with deli meat once a week or eat in a different dining hall once a week. This second email also reversed course on the implementation; the full meatless days announced in the first email were changed to only meatless lunches on those same days. It encouraged students to submit feedback at go/meatreduction-feedback.

The SGA Athletic Affairs Committee sent out a survey to all varsity, junior varsity, and club teams for reactions towards this second phase and the bill in general. While the results of the survey are still under review, there are also athletes that look to the bigger picture in addition to their own nutritional needs.

"I'm for it, though my initial reaction was negative," said Willson Moore '22, a Nordic skier. "I eat a pretty hearty amount of meat myself as an endurance athlete and like meat-included food better in general, but recognize the need to cut back on consumption as a college is much more important."

BENJY RENTON/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

Many participants at the teach-in took issue with the proposed policy and cited specific words and phrases they found confusing or unfair to students.

STUDENTS CRITIQUE PROPOSED PROTEST POLICY AT TEACH-IN

By NICOLE POLLACK
Senior Writer

A mixture of frustration, optimism and anger characterized a student teach-in on the proposed changes to Middlebury's protest policy last Friday. Held in the Hillcrest Orchard, the teach-in allowed students to share concerns about the proposed policy's lack of transparency and potential ramifications.

The newly drafted protest policy was published online in November as a potential replacement to the existing policy. The proposal sought to resolve areas of ambiguity in the college's existing policy (read our coverage of the new policy here).

At the beginning of the teach-in, attendees picked up copies of the proposed policy changes, which can be found at go.middlebury.edu/newprotestpolicy. Sarah Koch '18.5 asked students to read aloud the definitions of the terms "expressive activity," "disruption," and "civil disobedience" as listed at the end of the policy, and participants responded that they feared the vague definitions would give the college disciplinary leeway while limiting student autonomy.

Teach-in participants also cited frustration with the open meetings General Counsel Hannah Ross held last October and November. At the meetings Ross, the main administrator involved in drafting policy changes, explained the upcoming changes to the Middlebury Handbook and provided an overview of the work by Envisioning Middlebury, the Committee on Speech and Inclusion and college faculty.

Some attendees said they saw the fall meetings as the college's ingenuine attempt to show interest in student input.

"I feel like the administration hasn't listened to any of the feedback it's gotten in the past, so I feel skeptical about the policy reflecting what students are actually saying," said Emma Ronai-Durning '18.5, one of the organizers of the teach-in.

Taite Shomo '20.5, another organizer, asked participants whether they thought students' and community members' voices were being heard.

"We feel like we're not being listened to," said one student in response. The student went on to describe how the Student Government Association (SGA) bill that was intended to protect students engaging in protest was not incorporated into the new measures.

Another student said that the policy did not reflect the recommendations the Committee on Speech and Inclusion made in their report last January. In the recommendations, the committee emphasized the importance of changing campus culture over changing policy to address issues of free speech and protest.

All who spoke during the discussion agreed that the revisions were, at best, unclear and inflexible. Wengel Kifle '20, who attended both the teach-in and Ross's meeting in October, said she believed there was "really no room for change in the idea [Ross] was proposing."

Students also expressed concerns that the policy changes would ultimately lead to the penalization of students and staff while leaving tenured professors exempt from blame. They also speculated that violations of the policy would prevent new professors from receiving tenure.

A key point of uncertainty during the discussion was whether the policy sufficiently outlined the process of selecting and vetting speakers, and the absence of accountability for that body.

Participants pointed out the lack of examples of acceptable and unacceptable behavior included in the new policy, compared to the existing version. The new policy does not provide the college's expected response, either, leaving students protesters unsure about the consequences of their actions and making students on the Community Judicial Board responsible for determining their peers' punishments.

One student said the proposed policy only addressed student behavior and not students' motivation. Another pointed out that the policy made no mention of compounding disciplinary violations.

Several participants found fault in the new policy's stance against "deliberate and significant disruption," with disruption defined as "behavior that impairs or prevents expressive activity of others, or obstructs Middlebury's activities or essential operations," and prohibited disruption considered "all behavior that significantly disrupts Middlebury events, activities, programs and/or operations."

"What if intentions aren't disruptive?" one student said. Another argued that disruption is necessary for people to express opinions and suppressing it is counter to the point of a liberal arts institution.

"I think the ugliness of policy surrounding protest and compounding punishment has suppressed speech on this campus already," Koch said.

Toward the end of the teach-in, organizers handed out slips of paper and asked participants to respond to the following prompt: "What do we want our protest policy to look like? What would we like to be possible at Middlebury?"

"Fighting for justice, standing up for justice and academic security should not be at odds with each other," one student said in response. Others said that the policy should focus more on the content of protests, and that people should have a clear understanding of what's allowed, what's not, and what the consequences will be.

As one student put it, "Where's the line? If I cross it, what happens to me?"

In conclusion, Ronai-Durning urged everyone present to find something they are passionate about and to try and change it.

"There's lots one can do without being punished for it," she said.

BENJY RENTON/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

Facilities workers clear the snow off the Proctor patio on Monday.

SOAN Class Analyzes Exclusion on Campus

By KAYLA LICHTMAN
Staff Writer

Students in the Sociology & Anthropology course Trust and Social Capital recently produced a paper analyzing causes and effects of exclusion on Middlebury's campus. The department released the paper titled "Trust and Social Capital at Middlebury College: An Analysis of Community and Isolation," and investigated inequality in four principal sections: race, economic isolation, the queer community and body image.

"I want (this paper) to be a moment of honesty, for us. To look at what our campus culture is right now and for everybody in their own way to do something about it," said co-author Eva Bod '20.

The paper combines the results of interview case studies and a 27-question online survey completed by 607 respondents. The survey represents a relatively even distribution of class years, but is more heavily weighted toward female respondents and non-varsity athletes, representing 60.6 percent and 80.7 percent of respondents respectively.

In the section on race, the writers noted the frustration felt by respondents of color, 70 percent of whom revealed feeling a disconnect between the administration's ideology and practice when it comes to people of color.

The paper describes a "pervasive sense of racially-based isolation on campus." In particular, students discussed geographical segregation on campus, with certain areas, such as Atwater parties, the central areas of the dining halls and the gym being widely acknowledged as white and/or for athletes. The Anderson Freeman Center received conflicting reviews, with some students lauding the space as accepting, and others feeling as though the center spreads itself too thin in attempting to act as a resource for all minority identities.

"We have a lot of work to do toward supporting students who are historically from marginalized groups," said Dean of Students Baishakhi Taylor, who met with the students to discuss their results. "We all have to work towards building it back and it is not on the students alone to do so."

Recent administrative efforts addressing these feelings of exclusion include the recent hiring of Renee Wells as director of education for equity and inclusion and the creation of a faculty committee on diversity and inclusion.

The section on economic isolation also echoes ideas of exclusion — especially for students of color, student-employees and first-generation students — discussing how expenses prevent students from fully participating in college life. For example, 49 respondents mentioned being unable to afford concert tickets and 36 noted they were unable to participate in clubs and sports due to the extra costs.

The Snow Bowl, in particular, highlights the economic stratification on campus. Skiing and snowboarding, activities over which students build friendships, are too costly for many students. The paper suggests the school establish gear exchanges or create less expensive activities, such as ice skating, so that low-income students can engage with the Snow Bowl.

For this economically isolated cohort of students, working on campus can be an alienating experience. Not only do students miss out on bonding time with non-working friends, but also the interactions they do have while working may be atypical. An interviewee said, "you're not always treated as you'd expect to be, and it's weird interacting with other students as a student versus as a laborer."

In the section on style and exclusion in the queer community, the writers draw attention to the way queer students use clothing as a form of communication, a way to implicitly broadcast their sexual identity to others and avoid having to explain it out loud.

The paper also highlights the challenge for students who feel on the periphery of the queer community. The question of who is queer enough to be included was a common theme in the survey and interviews. An interviewee said, "I hate when I used to go to [Queer House] events and people in the "queer" community would tell me I looked too straight to be there. [My presentation] doesn't mean I don't love women."

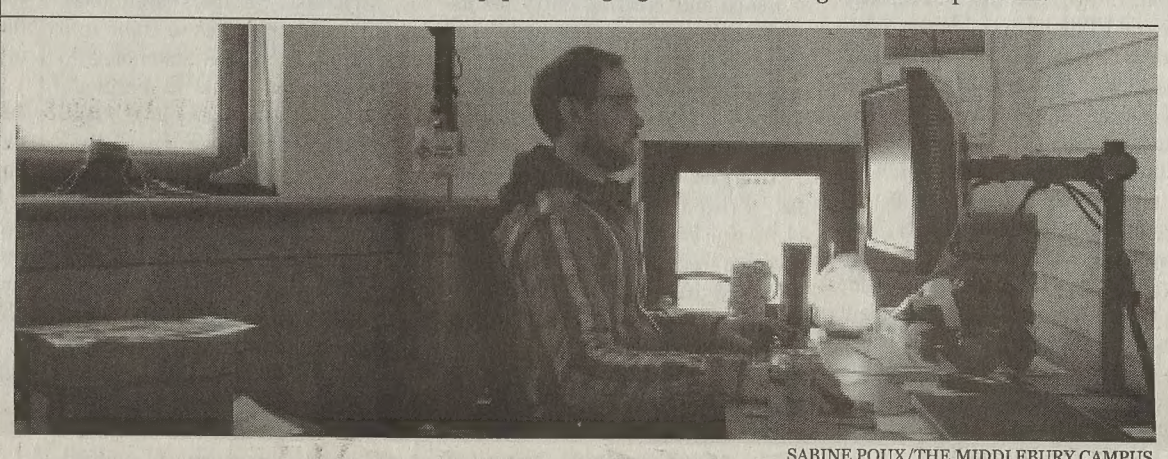
The writers suggest using non-queer spaces for queer events, like holding a drag show in McCullough, as a way to spread acceptance of the LGBTQ+ community. They also offer the suggestion of hiring a queer-specific staff member.

The last section, on body image as a source of social isolation, examines perceived attractiveness. According to the survey, 74.1 percent of respondents defined the "good body" at Middlebury to be toned and athletic. Furthermore, 70.7 percent said that being "skinny" is what constitutes the good body.

The data also presents a striking contrast between athletes — over 80 percent of whom identified themselves as "attractive" — and students of color and economically isolated students, who reported feeling less attractive than their white, or more well-off peers, respectively.

Lastly, the section highlights the dining halls and the gym as spaces where students negotiate ideas of thinness and beauty. 58 percent of survey respondents reported thinking that people take note of what they eat, and another 46 percent thought others take note of how often they work out.

"The students have put their fingers on a number of wicked problems," said Anthropology professor Mike Sheridan, referring to problems that evolve as one tries to solve them. He said there is little chance that his students' suggestions for improvement would be completely effective. However, he concluded, "without clumsy solutions, we're just stuck living with wicked problems."



SABINE POUX/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

Assistant director of student activities David Kloepfer said his team's planning process involved collaboration.

STAFF FEEL EFFECTS OF WORKFORCE PLANNING

Continued from Page 1

ourselves for a sustainable future," said Bill Burger, vice president of communications and chief marketing officer.

Beginning in the early fall, staff vice presidents across the institution were tasked with leading discussions within their departments about how their work could be redesigned, and done more efficiently. In December, each department submitted two different proposals to senior leadership, containing alternate plans that would cut compensation by 10 and 15 percent, respectively.

Now, staff across Middlebury can only wait. As of last week, Burger said, senior leadership was almost done reviewing the proposals and finalizing a list of positions to be cut. Before decisions are finalized, Human Resources is required by law to review the proposals to make sure they do not disproportionately affect certain demographics.

In early February, staff working in areas where the college plans to cut positions will get letters giving them the option to apply for buyouts. The college will send more applications than necessary, anticipating that many will decline to apply. By early March, the applications will be due and administrators will know whether enough staff have volunteered to take the buyouts, or whether they will need to resort to layoffs. On the other hand, if more staff than necessary apply, the most senior staff will be offered buyouts first.

The staff cuts in some areas will be partially offset by the creation of about 40 new staff positions in other areas — the result of new needs identified through the planning process. Applications for these positions will first be made available in early February to staff members who took buyouts.

WAITING FOR WORD

Workforce planning will have uneven effects across Middlebury, leaving some staff departments largely intact while transforming others. Likewise, staff contacted by The Campus report uneven feelings about the process. Many said they have been pleased with the level of transparency thus far, while some complain that the drawn-out process has left them on edge for too long. Others say they simply haven't paid much attention to it all.

"For our area, the communication's been really great," said David Kloepfer, the assistant director of Student Activities. "We haven't heard exactly what the full plan is as of yet. We're still waiting to hear the final outcome."

Missey Thompson, box office coordinator at the Mahaney Center for the Arts and a representative of the staff council, said workforce planning has been a major point of conversation at the council's meetings for some time. The staff council advocates for good working conditions for college employees and has held forums and posted information about workforce planning on its blog since the process was announced.

"We knew that something was coming a while ago — we didn't know what it all entailed until they were ready to tell us," she said, adding that some anxiety remains about the potential job cuts. "Whenever people have to leave, it can cause a lot of tension, but I think it depends on the day and how people feel so we're just kind of going with the flow. That's all we can do right now."

But some staff who feel most at risk of losing their jobs say that the long process has been a source of deep stress. Academic coordinators, who handle the logistics of academic departments and support faculty and student work, fear that some of their positions may be cut, while the coordinators who stay employed will need to deal with new responsibilities.

"Morale is terrible," said Judy Olinick, coordinator for the Russian, German and Japanese Departments. "Everybody is worried about it, it's just been going on so long."

While Olinick, like other staff, participated in the initial planning conversations this fall, she reported feeling helpless as the final say was left to senior leadership.

"We had all these meetings where we discussed it at great lengths, breaking up into little groups — 'What can you change, and how would you change it?'" she said. "But it doesn't mean anything unless you have some idea of what is really going to be changed."

Even staff who expect to keep their jobs face uncertainty about how much their job descriptions will be changed, according to Tim Parsons, landscape horticulturist and president of staff council. An employee who gets to keep 60 percent of their job tasks, for example, may still be disappointed by the results of workforce planning.

"You might lose the 40 percent of your job that you like," Parsons said.

Still, some staff look forward to the impending changes to their departments.

"I'm looking forward to some changes, to stir things up," said Christina Richmond, an Atwater Dining Hall I.D. checker and servery worker. "Change is always good. I'm not afraid of it."

GROWING PAINS

Multiple staff members reported frustration about the way workforce planning has become intermingled with the goals of Envisioning Middlebury, the college's long-term strategic framework. Patton herself connected the two processes in her June message, saying that they both entail "responsible stewardship of our resources."

Dan Frostman, manager of the Davis Family Library circulation desk, said that the alignment of the two processes made decision-making difficult.

"We were trying to envision the next five to 10 years while also trying to figure out what it would look like if we got rid of 10 percent of the staff," he said, noting that he reached out to his circulation staff to get input on both the changes they wanted to see and the cuts that had to be made. "So that was challenging and, personally, a little bit frustrating, to try to do those two sort of opposed things at the same time. There wasn't a lot of reconciling that could be done between the two."

Olinick said that she and her colleagues struggled to focus on the future, since workforce planning presented a more immediate issue.

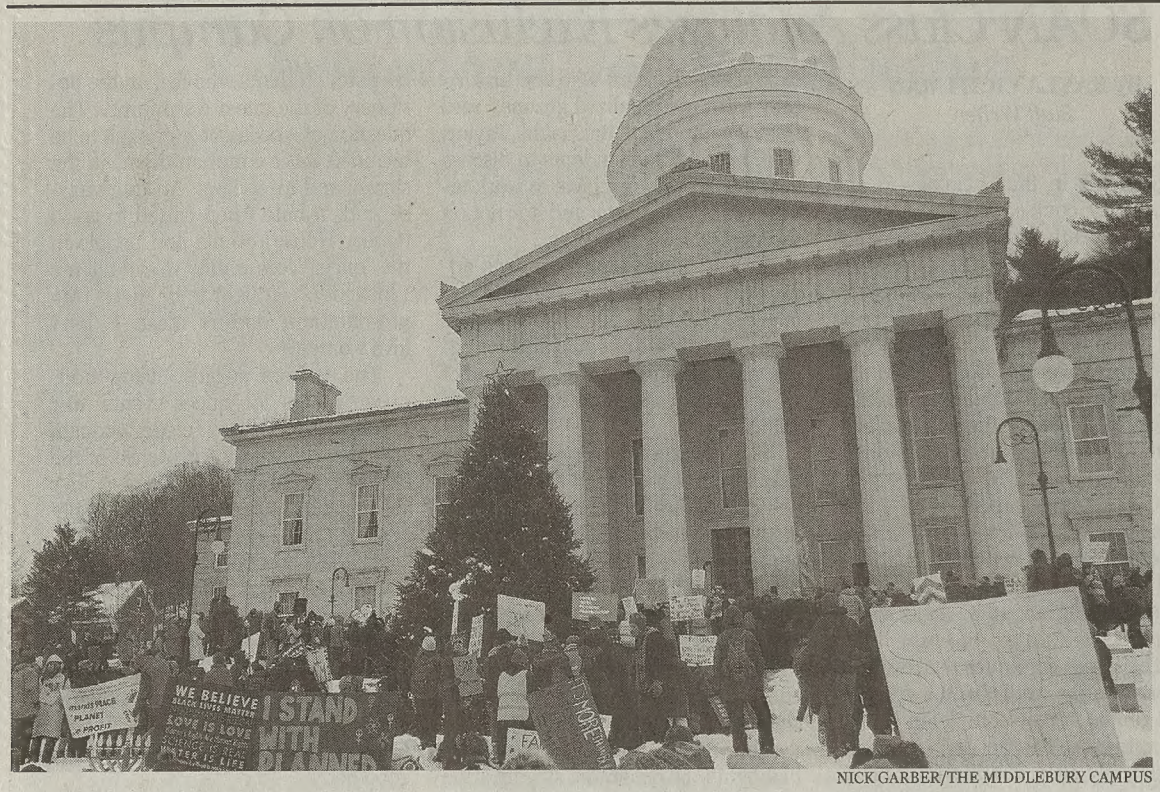
"How can you make recommendations about that if you're worried about keeping your job?" she said.

BEYOND WORKFORCE PLANNING

Workforce planning is not the only source of staff discontent at Middlebury. Low salaries in certain staff positions have prompted some employees to seek work elsewhere (See "Facing Low Wages," Page 1), and a 2017 staff survey showed low confidence in senior leadership and dissatisfaction with the way administrative decisions are communicated (See "Employee Dissatisfaction," Page 1).

But Burger said that those concerns have informed this process, prompting administrators to focus on communication and consider changing the compensation structure once the planning is complete.

Though administrators expect to resolve the institution's budget shortfalls within the next few years, the college remains heavily staffed, with a growing student body. With the newly-completed Envisioning Middlebury project serving as a likely precursor to a major fundraising campaign, this may not be the last time the college has to reconcile its long-term goals with its short-term needs.



NICK GARBER/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

Protesters, bundled up for the weather, gather on the steps of the Statehouse in Montpelier.

Women's March on Montpelier Draws Crowds Despite Freezing Weather

By ALLY MURPHY
Local Editor

Single-digit temperatures couldn't prevent nearly 1,000 women and allies from crowding the state capital last Saturday, Jan. 19 in support of the Women's March on Montpelier. In part inspired by the 2018 midterms, which brought throngs of women to Congress, Women's March Vermont organized the Women's Rally in Montpelier along with sister marches and rallies in cities throughout the world.

The rally in Montpelier was one of many that took place across the nation on Saturday to commemorate the 2017 Women's March on Washington. In 2017, on the first full day of Donald Trump's presidency, thousands protested in the U.S capital against the Trump administration and its threat to reproductive, civil and human rights. According to estimates by the Washington Post, 4.1 million people took part in various marches across the U.S., and thousands marched throughout the world in a show of global support for the resistance movement. President Trump's victory over Hillary Clinton outraged many who objected to his offensive treatment of and statements about women, and prompted the idea of the Women's March on Facebook the day after the election.

The protestors in various Women's March events voiced support not only for women's and reproductive rights, but also criminal justice, environmental issues, immigrants, Muslims, the disabled and gay and transgender people — all groups threatened under the Trump administration. Organizers of the Women's March view the protests as part of a larger resistance movement, in which various organizations and companies can play a role in facilitating the civic participation of women.

On the Women's March Vermont website, they describe their mission to "harness the political power of diverse women and their communities to create transformative social change. Women's March is a women-led movement providing intersectional education on a diverse range of issues and creating entry points ... through trainings, outreach programs and events. Women's March is committed to dismantling systems of oppression through nonviolent resistance."

Women's March Vermont organizer Kristen Vrancken further stated, "We've been organizing locally to advocate for the policies that matter to us, and those that impact women's lives, and we're flooding the streets in solidarity with our sisters in D.C. to remind the country that Vermont resists — and this time, we're coming with an agenda."

The March featured a series of female speakers ranging from women's rights to environmental activists. They also announced the Women's Agenda, which includes progressive federal policy demands in addition to local progressive legislative initiatives for attendees to support. The March was sponsored by Ben & Jerry's as well as the Vermont Women's Fund and ACLU Vermont.

Women's March Vermont describes marching as a means of: protecting women's bodies, affirming women's diversity, valuing women's work, respecting women's contributions and unifying women's allies. Aside from fighting for specific rights and facets of society, the protestors sought to project an overall theme of anti-oppression and unity leading up to the 2020 presidential election.

Within the March, various organizations advocated for their causes, including Planned Parenthood, which urged attendees to come to a Jan. 22 action at the Statehouse to secure abortion rights in Vermont, reported the Burlington Free Press. In addition, many representatives from groups such as Members of Migrant Justice, Black Lives Matter and University of Vermont Socialists were present. Students at the college expressed support for the Montpelier Women's March in addition to the global movement as a whole.

"I think there's something really powerful in the idea that this is not just one protest and one city, but a truly global movement of unified, powerful women standing up for rights and groups that should and must be defended," said Mariel Edokwe '20.

Where Are Our Feathered Friends?

By ARIADNE WILL
Contributing Writer

MIDDLEBURY — "Where are the birds?" asked Dottie Nelson on Middlebury's Front Porch Forum email newsletter on Jan. 11.

"This winter there just haven't been birds at our feeder," Nelson said. "I was curious whether other people in Middlebury had noticed the same thing, or if we were doing something wrong with our feeder."

The post, which received numerous responses from members in and around the Middlebury community, sparked speculation among bird enthusiasts. While some asked if the use of old birdseed could be the issue, others wondered if the absence was the product of a declining bird population.

"In past years, we would have to refill our feeders at least once a week, sometimes twice a week," Nelson recalled. "We would see all kinds of birds; lots of different species. In previous years we saw tons of birds, but this year we put the feeders out around Thanksgiving and we haven't refilled it at all."

"The statistics collected by the Christmas Bird Count reported 15,659 birds this year, which is down 300 from last year," Nelson added. The 300 missing birds do not seem to be cause for astonishment, however, as numbers collected in December 2018 show the population change at less than two percent.

The presence of birds in Middlebury does not seem to have a positive effect on feeder visitations, however: an informal poll conducted by Nelson shows that, of 35 feeders in Middlebury and surrounding communities, 25 reported having few to no visitations from birds this winter.

"It is quite possible that some birds moved out of the Middlebury area in response to the lack of natural foods," said Steve Faccio, a conservation biologist at the Vermont Center for Ecostudies. "With the lack of seeds and nuts, birds may have moved further south seeking more abundant food resources."

This answer was consistent with the response Nelson received from Jim Andrews, the coordinator of the Middlebury Christmas Bird Count, an event under the umbrella of the Audubon Christmas Bird Count.

Nelson speculated that the presence of bears in Middlebury in the spring may have also had something to do with the lack of birds this winter.

"Bears were a big deal in Middlebury last spring," she said. "A mother bear and her three cubs moved into town and began raiding garbage cans. Eventually Fish and Wildlife came up with the idea that if everybody took down their birdfeeders, the bears would eventually move out on their own and Fish and Wildlife wouldn't have to shoot or relocate them."

COURTESY PHOTO

Dottie Nelson's deserted bird feeder awaits hungry beaks.

While the bears eventually moved on, many continued to keep their birdfeeders indoors until late fall to ensure the prevention of the bears' return. Nelson's hunch that the withdrawal of the feeders may have contributed to the absence of birds this winter was supported by Alexis Will, Post-Doctoral Research Fellow at the Institute of Arctic Biology at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

"All summer long certain birds — especially chickadees — collect seeds and stash them," Will said. "They have a mental map of where all their caches are, and included in those mental maps are where those bird feeders are. If during the fall, when they are setting up their winter caches, those feeders aren't present, those feeders are not cataloged as something to visit during the winter, when the birds are not doing a lot of exploration."

Though Nelson put her feeder back up in November, the opportunity for birds such as chickadees to populate the feeder may not have come in time for the birds to store long-term "mental maps" of the food source.

This mental mapping may not explain the absence of all birds, but Faccio said that their scarcity is not something to worry about, for now.

"It is possible that the birds will return in future winters," he said. "Many of our winter birds are fairly nomadic, moving to areas where they find food. So they may show up in our area in fall and stick around for a while, but then move on to other areas if food is scarce."

Ice Cream on Trial: Ben & Jerry's Grapples with Accusations of Greenwashing

By COURTNEY CRAWFORD
Online Editor

WATERBURY — Ben & Jerry's, every ice cream lover's guilty pleasure, was sued by the Organic Consumers Association (OCA) on the grounds of false advertising in July of 2018. Anyone who has eaten Ben & Jerry's ice cream is familiar with the company's iconic happy cow imagery that evokes a hippie, social justice-oriented and green marketing platform. But what they probably don't know is that this platform might not be completely warranted.

The OCA recently tested 11 flavors of Ben & Jerry's most popular ice cream flavors, including Chocolate Chip Cookie Dough, The Tonight Dough and Chocolate Fudge Brownie, for an herbicide called glyphosate. Glyphosate is found in Monsanto's weed killer, Roundup, which has been banned in many countries due to research that has shown it is a "probable human carcinogen." The results of the study, published by New York Times, showed all 11 flavors except Cherry Garcia tested positive for the herbicide.

While the company avoids implying that the lawsuit unfairly targets them, a recent statement released by Ben & Jerry's attempts to put the OCA's results into context. Many other everyday food items and products on the market, including organic whole wheat bread and whole grain oat breakfast cereal, have tested much higher for glyphosate than Ben & Jerry's ice cream. The page also cites both the Health Research Institute Laboratories' comment that the amounts of glyphosate found "would seem totally irrelevant," as well as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's claim that it would take inordinate amounts of glyphosate to affect a child.

The lawsuit also accuses Ben & Jerry's of overstating their commitment to high animal welfare standards. Such advertising has historically brought in a loyal, niche consumer base. The company's "Caring Dairy" program that sets standards for the treatment of their cows is commendable in theory. However, in reality — according to the OCA and Regeneration Vermont — only about 25% of the farms from which Ben & Jerry's receives milk actually adhere to the standards.

"40 to 79% of the phosphorus and nitrogen pollution in Vermont's waterways comes from dairy farms."

The milk and cream that Ben & Jerry's uses for their beloved flavors of ice cream are sourced from a co-op in St. Albans City, Vermont that combines milk received from both local organic dairy farms and large factory-style dairy farms. These factory-style dairy farms use Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) that might speed up the process of getting milk, but do not fall in line with the set standards.

Protestors also claim mega-dairies in Vermont that supply large companies like Cabot and Ben & Jerry's are polluting lakes and streams. Lake Champlain is one of 100 waterways now labeled as "impaired" according to Regeneration Vermont, a non-profit organization based in Walden, Vermont. The organization's site states that "40 to 79% of the phosphorus and nitrogen pollution in Vermont's waterways comes from dairy farms. And, almost all of the pesticide pollution comes from these dairies."

The Middlebury Campus reached out to Ben & Jerry's, however they declined to comment specifically regarding the lawsuit.

"A lot of people aren't properly educated about many environmental issues that exist and how severe/important addressing these issues are," said Hannah Gheller '22. "Education to the masses and translating that into policy change would be important steps in changing this."

A Ben & Jerry's factory tour guide, Noel Cramer, spoke on ways that the company attempts to be as green as possible. He noted the wastewater treatment site in Waterbury, Vermont that uses recycled grey water for the factory's toilets and the anaerobic digester that uses methane and natural gases to generate heat and electricity. He further stressed the evaporative cooling technologies used to chill the ice cream faster, as well as the research being done on alternative packaging. Ultimately, Cramer brought the focus back to Ben & Jerry's mission statement claiming that for the company, "it's not just reducing their footprint, but eliminating it" as best they can.

BENJERRY.COM

Cherry Garcia, one of the most iconic Ben & Jerry's pints.

Michael Colby, a Vermont writer and maple syrup producer, wrote in the VTDigger, "If [Ben & Jerry's] took the lead ... the entire state could begin a transition away from the kind of industrial, commodity-based dairy system that is wreaking so much havoc with Vermont's agriculture — and culture."

Several Middlebury College students, frequent consumers of the frozen treats made by Ben & Jerry's offered their opinions on the Ben & Jerry's lawsuit.

"It's definitely something to address, but if a lot of companies' products contain glyphosate it's not fair to target them," said Anna Saviano '22. "But if you think of it in terms of media coverage, the attention goes a long way and something like this has to start somewhere."

Max Taxman '22 agreed that the lawsuit helps to hold companies accountable to their advertising. "[But] it seems more important to target companies that are more significantly impacting the environment," he said. "You could argue that all non-vegan farm-related industries are bad for the environment, and say that they should all be targeted."

Taxman speculated that the lawsuit could have a significant impact on Ben & Jerry's as the company gains a lot of social capital from their environmentally friendly marketing.

"If the claims in the lawsuit are true, this is a major case of corporate greenwashing," said Van Barth '21. "Whether the lawsuit will actually create any change in the dairy industry, to their ingredients list or to their marketing platform, well, I guess we'll just have to see."

Overdoses Spur Increased Access to Narcan in VT Prisons

By QIAN LI
Staff Writer

Over the first weekend of the new year, at the Northwest State Correctional Facility in Swanton, Vt., two inmates' lives were in grave danger due to drug overdoses.

Both inmates were unresponsive to verbal and physical stimuli and one was discovered with no pulse, Mike Touchette, Commissioner of the Department of Corrections, told The Campus.

According to Touchette, the two individuals were given Narcan, an overdose-reversal drug, and other first aid, with CPR given to the inmate without a pulse. After responding to first aid/CPR, both individuals survived and were able to return to the facility within 24 hours of their departure thanks to "the lifesaving efforts of the staff."

"In overdose situations, seconds count," Touchette said. Touchette was part of an initiative to increase access to Narcan in Vermont Corrections by extending permission to prison guards and workers, as well as shift supervisors and nursing staff, to carry the drug. "Allowing unit officers to carry and administer Narcan immediately could save a life," he continued. "Though our typical emergency response times at all facilities is about ten to thirty seconds, a few seconds could make the difference."

Department of Health Commissioner Mark Levine echoed this view and regarded the new policy as "incredibly wonderful."

Levine couldn't confirm whether the incident in Swanton was an opiate overdose; however, he said that there was absolutely no risk in using Narcan "anytime you would even think it is an opiate overdose," as it would not hurt people and could save lives.

With the already established policy that increases access to Narcan for any citizens within the state — including first responders, private citizens, pharmacies, etc. — Vermont

Continued on Page 5

An Inside Look at Middlebury Magazine

By ELLIE ANDERSON
Local Editor

MIDDLEBURY — Middlebury Magazine: You see it around campus sometimes. You never signed up for it, but somehow it got to your parents' doorstep and now they're texting you about some speaker who came to Middlebury two months ago. You get regular 'Middlebury News' emails in your inbox with links to articles in the magazine and you never fully understand where they come from. And you've probably wondered about all these things, but never cared enough to find out.

Well, now is your chance: here's a look into the mystery behind Middlebury Magazine.

Over the past week, the magazine's staff have spent hours proofreading and tweaking the last details of their January issue — one of four issues each year — which will be distributed to its 50,000 readers within the next month. Over half of those readers will be alumni of the college, and the other half will include parents, current faculty and staff, those who choose to subscribe for free and anyone who decides to pick up a copy around campus. You are not alone, however, if Middlebury Magazine often seems to operate in an alternate sphere from your daily student life on the hill.

ELLIE ANDERSON/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

The cover of the Spring 2016 issue.

The magazine's central audience is alumni of the college and its central mission is maintaining those former students' connections to Middlebury. This means that much of the magazine features life updates from alumni and changes on campus that seem like old news to current students. But even though the magazine is run entirely by college staff, students can always make submissions and take an active part in the magazine's representation of the college.

The Campus took a look into the alternate universe of Kitchel House, the building across the street from Twilight that holds Middlebury's Office of Communications and the staff of Middlebury Magazine. The magazine staff were eager to give students a glimpse into their work.

"Not that we're intentionally opaque, but I think people don't understand how stories get in the magazine, how stories are created, where they come from," said the magazine's Editorial Director Matt Jennings. "Who knows, maybe after this I'll be hearing from people all the time."

Jennings has been the Editorial Director of the magazine for the past seventeen years, and his main responsibilities involve writing features, editing pieces and overseeing the magazine as a whole. The past week was a busy one for him because the magazine's key feature piece came in later than normal. At this point, he had already received the issue's final edits, which were FedExed back to him all the way from Portland, Oregon, by the magazine's remote proofreader Nina Maynard. Though he has never actually met Maynard, Jennings has worked closely with her for the past seventeen years and described her work as "invaluable."

Back in 2002, Jennings was originally hired to work for the magazine full-time, but this only lasted about six months, he said, before he was given other non-magazine communications projects to oversee as well.

This situation is true of most of the other magazine staff members, which is pretty unique; Dartmouth, for instance, has an entire staff solely devoted to its alumni magazine. Middlebury Magazine has only five in-house staff members — most of the magazine's stories are written by freelance writers or alumni — but everyone's job also includes outside responsibilities unrelated to the magazine.

Jennings is in it for the magazine. "I've never seen another job here or anywhere else that I wanted to do more than I do now, and the magazine is a big part of that," he said. "I'm happy overseeing other publications that we do, but my first love is this."

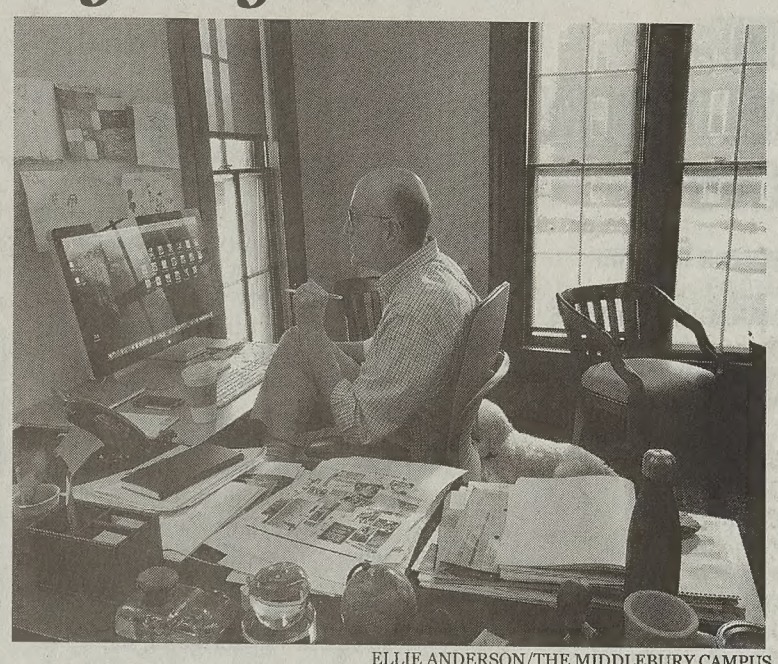
Other staff members felt similarly. Pamela Fogg is the creative director and has been with the magazine for twenty years. Her job mostly revolves around design — though she and Jennings usually collaborate on the cover.

"I love working with illustrators and photographers, giving them the synopsis of the story and working with them to figure out the best approach for visuals that will be engaging when you tell the story," Fogg said. She pointed out the colorful draft pages that line her walls, which she hangs up so that she can look at them with fresh eyes again and again. By last week's point in the process leading up to publication, the designs were finished and Jennings brought Maynard's final proofs to Fogg's office for her to read and offer input.

Fogg estimated that working with the magazine is about half her job, while the other half involves designing for Admissions and Advancement materials. For Fogg, too, the magazine has more appeal than her other tasks. She described the familial nature of the magazine staff, particularly evident in their weekly meetings.

"These meetings are quite special in that we all operate like a big family — slightly offbeat, quirky," she said. "Many inside references that we draw on that crack us up, we finish each other's sentences, talk all at the same time and, in general, it's an exhausting, exhilarating and oddly productive one hour per week."

Just like a big family, there is even some drama present among the dogs that frequent Kitchel House: Jennings brings his fluffy goldendoodle Tom to the office nearly every day, who is perpetually friendly until Fogg's German Shepherd Schröder shows up and Tom retreats to his owner's office. The cycle of fear continues when copy editor Jessie Raymond's poodle/terrier mix Thor arrives, at which point Schröder avoids all eye contact in fear of the tiny dog.



ELLIE ANDERSON/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

Matt Jennings, Editorial Director of Middlebury Magazine, hard at work.

Jessie Raymond has worked part-time as copy editor since 2016, and though copy editing for the magazine is only about 10 percent of her job, she and her dog are part of the family too. During the past week leading up to print of the January issue, her job became magazine-focused, but her responsibilities are usually more heavily focused on copy editing all the other publications that come out of the Communications Office.

Sara Marshall, the alumni editor, works in an office downstairs from the rest of the team. Though she also has tasks outside of the magazine, her central responsibilities revolve around the network of Middlebury alumni, tasks that she finishes up before many other sections. Marshall writes and edits the magazine's Class Acts pages, communicates with the class correspondents who gather those updates about alumni and organizes all the photos that alumni send in of weddings and other celebrations.

"I love working with the alumni," Marshall said. "We get a lot of alums who react to things in the magazine and send in letters and that's another connection. It's a great way to keep that alumni base involved with the college."

Though one might expect an alumni magazine such as Middlebury's to conform to portraying a certain image of the college to its former students — many of whom donate large sums of money to the school — the magazine staff consider themselves proudly independent.

"What I love about it is that we can just tell our stories," Marshall said. "There's no pressure on us from anybody to make sure that you make Middlebury the focus of the story so we can make money."

Jennings echoed this sentiment. "We report on the same people who publish us," he said. "But I feel that it's incumbent upon us to be portraying the college in an accurate light, but also in an honest light, and that means telling complex stories sometimes... and it's okay if someone doesn't like something."

He cited in particular the magazine's Spring 2016 issue entitled "Let's Talk About Race," the cover of which a reader ripped off and sent back to Jennings with an attached sticky note that read, "This is bullshit." Jennings has received countless such "angry letters" from disgruntled alumni in response to the stories the magazine publishes. Some letters arrive in the form above, while others are longer and well-researched. Regardless, Jennings tries to respond to every one.

"What I love about the angry letters is that it really shows that they care about the place," he said. "I know that there are institutions out there that would not have been confident enough to have students and faculty talking very candidly about negative experiences at Middlebury, but that was happening. We felt like our alums needed to know that was happening."

Raymond, an alumna herself, agreed that though the magazine has to walk a fine line because of its audience, it also has the power to complicate Middlebury's story. "I think the magazine is a good place for people to see the different sides of their little college on the hill, which is actually a little bit more than that," she said.

Staff Struggle with Low Pay and Shortages

Continued from Page 1

All employees quoted in this article wished to remain anonymous for fear of retribution.

In a report published last year, the National Low Income Housing Coalition showed that a resident of Addison County would have had to earn an average of at least $19.63 per hour or work close to two full-time jobs at minimum wage to afford rent and utilities. The county is now the fifth most expensive in the state of Vermont.

"Nobody wants to come here, and when they do come here, they don't stay."

The experiences of staff members reflect the figure. "With rent and food, it's hard to live here on the pay," a second custodian said.

In response to these concerns, the administration has often cited generous benefits packages the college provides to full-time employees. With good insurance, retirement plans and even subsidized education for children, working at the college remains an attractive option compared to similar jobs in town. It's a benefit that many members see as a critical part of their livelihoods.

"My friends in construction, they're getting paid more. But they don't have good insurance," said a member of the facilities staff. "Several years ago, I had a medical issue, and that was a big deal."

Others say that benefits are not enough. Staff earning close to minimum wage may be working from paycheck to paycheck — where money today means the difference between paying the phone bill or not.

"Your first year, you get five weeks time off. The health insurance is top-notch. But if you're making 12 or 13 bucks an hour, what good does time off do?" asked a second member of the facilities department.

"[Time off] is useless because you can't afford to go anywhere," said the first custodian. "Might as well work."

The level of pay is not only affecting the living conditions of staff, but also contributes to a shortage in certain departments on campus. Managers have struggled to fill open slots, with nine openings left unfilled in custodial positions.

It is a jarring change for college staff used to getting the help they need in order to fulfill the various demands of the expansive campus. A third employee in facilities recounted his first few years working at the college a decade ago, when custodial positions would be highly sought after.

"We would put out a help-wanted ad for floor crew and there will be 10, 12 job applicants," he said. "You had to beg to get an interview here. And now you can't drag 'em in here," the first custodial worker said."Nobody wants to come here, and when they do come here, they don't stay."

Staff members speak of friends who have chosen to work in similar jobs in the state, foregoing better benefits for a slightly higher base pay. Listings for custodial positions in school districts around Burlington or Essex can start at $15 per hour with benefits, attracting people who in years past may have chosen to work at the college. Even jobs closer to home, including crew positions at Dunkin' Donuts and cashier positions at the National Foods Co-op are paying wages close to what the college offers — around $12 per hour.

Broader trends outside of the college's control have also exacerbated the issue. Low unemployment rates across the United States have led to a tight labor market where employers struggle to fill entry-level positions. At the end of last year, the unemployment rate in Addison County stood at 2.3 percent, one of the lowest since the Department of Labor began recording the data in Vermont.

Even when departments are able to hire, however, staff turnover remains an issue. Employees are discouraged by a perception that the administration fails to adequately reward good performance — a 2017 staff survey revealed that only 27 percent of faculty and staff were satisfied with the college's recognition and awards programs. (See Page 1).

Over the past five years, pay raises have hovered around two percent across the board, with few opportunities for merit-based rewards in lower-wage positions.

"I came in at the entry level, and now I'm at the top of the wage band. But it's much harder for people to do that now," said the first facilities employee, who has worked at the college for 25 years.

The first custodial worker shared the same sentiment. "If you screw off and I work hard, we get the same raise," he said.

The administration, for its part, has responded to these concerns by launching a review of performance management processes, hoping to wrap up by the fall of 2020.

SABINE POUX/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

The service building, where staff offices are housed.

Still, many remain unconvinced that conditions will improve. "This used to be a great place to work. It still is, it still is. But it's too bad," said the first custodial worker, reflecting on his time at the college.

Expanded Accesss to Life-Saving Drug

Continued from Page 4

has become a progressive pioneer in dealing with the nation's opioid crisis.

"The cornerstones for any state that wants to cope quickly and successfully with the opioid crisis is to have universal access to Narcan," said Levine.

The Department of Health aims to provide treatment for anyone who requests it in a timely fashion without any prerequisites. The treatment is therefore accessible, individualized and considers context-specific questions.

Ever since former Governor Peter Shumlin's powerful speech on the opioid crisis five years ago, progress has been made across various areas of the issue, including prevention, intervention, treatment and recovery.

"The one thing that we stand out for the most is that we do have a treatment system that now has no waiting list and has the capacity to treat anyone who wants to be treated," said Levine.

According to Levine, while only one to two out of 10 people who have an opioid use disorder are in treatment nationwide, that number is somewhere between three or four in the state of Vermont. However, how to engage the rest of that state population and how to quickly and efficiently provide them with the treatment they need still remains one of the major dilemmas moving forward.

"A lot of people feel stigmatized," continued Levine. "We have done our best trying to educate people about the changes [occurring] in brain chemistry and neurobiology, and that addiction is not a moral failing by any means."

Over recent years the state has made efforts to build a more supportive recovery system to ensure that people have a complete recovery not only by receiving medication, but also by obtaining housing, transportation and employment.

A good recovery does not just mean "you are on medication treatment and cease taking drugs;" it also means having "a fully productive, gratifying life" and feeling "positive about yourself" as "a contributing member of the society," Levine said.

Regarding the work ahead, Levine believes prevention is key.

Thomas Hanley, Chief of Police at Middlebury Police Department, supported a similar view. Attempting to go beyond drug use in tackling the opioid crisis, Hanley regards it more from a social perspective and tries to understand the many social causes behind.

"Why are these people using drugs to begin with? When we answer that question, we will be able to completely solve the problem," said Hanley.

The opioid crisis demands our attention when it is estimated that up to 70 percent of the individuals with substance use disorders may also have an ongoing mental illness.

"If you figure out why someone develops a substance disorder in the first place, it's often related to traumatic experiences earlier in life, which we call adverse childhood and adverse family experiences," explained Levine. Among people who began using in their 20s, he explained, there is a trend of other substance use, including that of nicotine, alcohol, cannabis and more.

Although the State has made major advancements in resolving the opioid crisis, for Hanley it remains an important issue to address on a local level.

"You can't just have some office say 'let the federal government treat it,'" Hanley said. "It's a local problem, they are local people, [and] we need to be responsible for that."

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This J-Term: Remember Staff

By THE EDITORIAL BOARD

Middlebury College had its first-ever Martin Luther King Jr. Day off this week, and many were left wondering what the commemoration meant — and, perhaps more importantly, why it was happening only for the first time.

At the very least, the holiday demonstrated the administration's often-unrealized but well-intentioned desire to make all Middlebury students feel equally recognized and validated here. It is right to set aside a day to honor Dr. King's advocacy for justice, nonviolence and peace, but committing ourselves to Dr. King's legacy means that we must confront the injustices he fought and remember those he struggled for, including oppressed racial minorities and workers. To truly honor Martin Luther King Jr., we should follow his example by refusing to neglect those in our own community who feel overlooked and invisible.

After our recent snowstorm, as we walk neatly shoveled paths across campus, it is difficult not to notice the staff members who work tirelessly to make Middlebury liveable. Last Winter Term, we published an article on the snow removal staff. Clinton "Buzz" Snyder, the college's landscape supervisor, and Luther Tenny, facilities maintenance and operations director, work together to oversee snow removal operations. For a "typical snow event" (a foot or less of snow), 14 snow plows and ten crews of shovelers assemble to tackle the campus. Workers are called in the order of their proximity to the school; staff who live in New York are called in earlier than those who live in Vermont. Plow crews come in around 4 a.m. to clear the roads and walkways. These crews clean over 120 college buildings, including off-campus housing such as Weybridge, Homestead and the Mill.

NICK GARBER/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

This spring, the Middlebury College staff and faculty will experience significant changes. In an effort to maintain Middlebury's financial sustainability, the administration announced a workforce planning process last year that will identify areas where the college can be more efficient in its spending, in part through faculty and staff cuts. In the end, the college hopes to cut about 10 percent of staff compensation costs through buyouts, and save over $2 million over the next few years through early retirement by faculty.

It is unfortunate that the people who work the hardest for this school should have to worry about the security of their jobs. Recent dining hall short-staffing during this week's snowstorm pointed to the value of each individual staff member. It's difficult to meet our low-waste environmental standards when we have to use paper plates and cups instead of reusable ones. We rely on staff for all our school's operations, from putting on plays to coordinating on behalf of student organizations. Our school does not run without them.

As a student newspaper, we have not always done a good enough job covering the issues that matter to the staff members who make Middlebury a place we can call home. We understand that part of the reason why this relationship has been tenuous in the past is because staff members are often not allowed to speak freely without repercussions. Our renewed commitment to community integration may take the form of more anonymous interviews. As we have seen in the process of putting this issue together, there are more nuanced considerations for staff who wish to voice opinions or concerns than there are for students or faculty.

We believe that The Campus should be the medium through which staff members can express their opinions openly.

At the same time, as Middlebury's primary newspaper, we hope to provide an outlet for every person in our community. We hope to extend the lines of communication and give voice to faculty and staff concerns, which should be concerns for every person who has a stake in this school — that is, for all of us. If it weren't for staff, Middlebury would be unsuccessful, not to mention uninhabitable. Let's appreciate the people without whom this college would cease to exist.

Divestment and Energy 2028: A Future Worth Fighting For

By EMILY THOMPSON

In a world of sobering climate reports and inadequate national action, institutions that actively seek to propel the climate movement forward are the catalysts needed for national progress. Middlebury is one of those inspirational catalysts, and in choosing to attend Middlebury, I hoped to join its momentous wave of environmentalism. In learning about the student-led carbon neutrality campaign, the Environmental Studies Program, and the fossil fuel divestment campaign, I saw the drive, intelligence, and hope of the student body. Beyond that, I saw the unflinching support of an administration destined to pioneer true environmental stewardship.

Now with four months under my belt as a Middlebury student, I can positively assert that the Middlebury students of Sunday Night Environmental Group (SNEG), a student climate justice organization, are addressing some of the world's most challenging problems. With its support for divestment and internal carbon pricing, SNEG is taking comprehensive action to curb the effects of climate change. Upon encountering these initiatives on campus and witnessing the process of their incorporation in the Energy 2028 proposal, my preconceived notions about the College were confirmed.

The Energy 2028 proposal provides a complete transition to 100% renewables, a 25% reduction in consumption, an internal carbon pricing system, the enhancement of sustainability education, and a response to the student divestment referendum. First proposed in 2013, the student divestment ask advocates for the complete removal of approximately $53.7 million of the College's endowment from the fossil fuel industry. It was ratified by the SGA with 79% student support, followed by faculty support of 92%. Internal carbon pricing has also received popular support over the years, as have movements for sustainability literacy and emissions reductions. Because Middlebury is often recognized as a leader in sustainable higher education, the idea of sustained fossil fuel use and investments appear contradictory to the College's identity. Through Energy 2028, the Middlebury community and Board of Trustees have an exciting opportunity to demonstrate their support for environmental justice.

Being at the College now amidst the whirlwind of the divestment campaign, however, I understand the nuances of this 6-year project. I understand that change can feel impossible; humans have a tendency to wait for the 11th hour, the 59th minute. I understand that each community member acts with the best of intentions for the College and that the Board of Trustees prioritizes fiduciary responsibility to students and the school. Divestment from fossil fuels and the other components of Energy 2028 align with this goal. In acting on Energy 2028, the College can take leadership in the realm of climate action and its mission of global leadership, while also maintaining fiscal responsibility. This positive action provides an unparalleled opportunity for Middlebury to catalyze progress in the realm of environmentalism.

Ultimately, positive action is part of a larger need within the environmental movement, a need for a broadening of the conversation around energy. There is a need for a vision, a desire for a "so what" that can mobilize entire battalions of climate activists. For it will not be fear that motivates and mobilizes but rather innovation and ingenuity that will charge the troops and launch them into action. What do we want to find when the dust settles and the noise dies? We must advocate for that world we want to see, not against an ungodly alternative.

When I went to Washington D.C. on December 10th to protest with the Sunrise Movement for a Select Committee for a Green New Deal, I saw a movement that painted a picture of that beautiful world so many of us hope to live in one day. I saw a diverse but equal society, a government that truly protects its people from the corrupting influences of fossil fuel money, a clean country, a green country, a society that is healthy and employed and happy. The kind of hope produced from a movement like Sunrise is the type of hope so close you can taste it.

I taste this type of hope in the energy here at Middlebury. Yes, Divest Midd is against the idea of financially endorsing and enabling the activities of exploitative companies and individuals within the fossil fuel industry. However, more importantly, SNEG hopes to show the Board, the students, the faculty, staff, alumni, state, and country what our world can be. We can be a country that puts our money where our mouths are, a country that fully embodies leadership in progress and innovation, a country that actively chases the values of responsibility, integrity, creativity, and contribution we so espouse. Ultimately, though, that transition to a just, responsible, clean country can only come when institutions and individuals push for it, when they break the ground in acts like Energy 2028.

We are asking our school to end its ownership of the industry poisoning our homes and our futures. We are making the economics of green initiatives more feasible. We are truly achieving the carbon neutrality that has been the face of our environmental identity and taking responsibility for the consumption patterns that have created this global problem in the first place. We are empowering students and magnifying voices, challenging the status quo and demanding the higher standards we know our school is capable of achieving. Taking positive action on Energy 2028 can propel our school and our country on a path to change the world. My only question is, why on Earth would you want to stop that?

Note: Anyone wishing to support these causes can attend the following events:

Thursday, 01/24:
Personal Divestment Action 1:00 at ADK
Divest Panel at 4:30 in Dana Auditorium
Friday 01/25:
School-wide Orange-Out All Day
Letter-Writing Event at 1:00 at Mead Chapel
Storytelling Event 2:00 at Mead Chapel

Emily Thompson is a member of the Middlebury College class of 2022.

Letter to the Editor: In Support of Meat Reduction

By SCOTT CENTER FOR SPIRITUAL AND RELIGIOUS LIFE STAFF

At the Scott Center for Spiritual and Religious Life, we applaud the initiative to reduce the amount of meat consumption on campus. Not only is the goal of reducing our consumption by 30% good for the environment, which we heartily support, but it is also a step in the right direction to making food choices at Middlebury more inclusive of a diverse population of students, staff and faculty with different religious and non-religious observances and worldviews.

Many religions, traditions, and worldviews put a limit on the consumption of meat in one way or another. Some people consider their choice to not eat meat or any animal products part of their spiritual or ethical worldview, regardless of their religious or non-religious background, whether for environmental, animal rights, or health reasons. Some Hindus, Buddhists and Jains do not consume meat at all in accordance with their belief in not-harming sentient beings. Some Christians restrict the consumption of meat in their diets at certain times of year like Lent, and some Christian groups like Seventh Day Adventists also lean vegetarian. Muslims and Jews limit their meat consumption to certain kinds of meat, and then even further to meat of the acceptable kind that has been slaughtered in a certain way. Because access to Halal and Kosher meat is not the norm in the dining halls, students observing these dietary restrictions are also vegetarian by default for most of the time they dine at Middlebury.

The increased focus on vegetarian meals will hopefully provide more substantial vegetarian options for those observing these kinds of dietary restrictions. In addition to using the money saved to purchase more sustainably grown meat for when it is served, Dining Services might also consider using some of those savings to provide properly prepared Halal and Kosher meat more frequently.

Religious traditions and philosophical world views have always taught that our food choices reflect our values, and that being mindful of what we eat brings holiness to this everyday act. Thank you to EatReal, the Environmental Affairs Committee, the SGA, and Dining Services for bringing this consciousness to our food at Middlebury.

Saifa Hussain
Ellen McKay
Mark Orten
Danielle Stillman

NOTES FROM THE DESK

Why a Staff Issue?

By NICK GARBER and REBECCA WALKER

Does being a student newspaper at a small college mean that we must confine ourselves to student issues? Or does it mean that we can serve as a platform for all stakeholders in our community despite our limited student perspective?

In this issue, we tried to answer this question, using the ongoing workforce planning process as the motivation to dedicate most of the paper to college staff. The front page features a story explaining the workforce planning process and the effect it has had on the people who have shaped their lives around the work they do at the college and the paychecks they receive from it. If you flip through the sections, you will also find stories about Zamboni drivers and academic coordinators, as well as staff wages and job satisfaction.

This week's focus is overdue. We recognize that in the past, our paper has not actively sought out participation from members of the community, especially staff members whose presence is not always as visible as that of our professors and administrators, who we are more likely to engage with on a regular basis. But we hope this issue will serve as a turning point for our paper as we step up our efforts to incorporate the voices of community members who don't have the same kind of access that we have to a student newspaper.

To any staff who have picked up a copy of our paper this week, we hope you find our coverage to be a step in the right direction. But if there are other issues or stories that you think deserve to be covered in our community newspaper, we encourage you to reach out: email us at campus@middlebury.edu or send us an anonymous tip at middleburycampus.com/tips. Thank you.

Nick Garber and Rebecca Walker are the managing editors of this paper. They are members of the Middlebury College Class of 2019.

Notes from the SGA President: Winter Term Ideas

By NIA ROBINSON

I hope everyone's J-Term is going well! Through the snow, negative degrees, and Sabai Sabai being delivered, it has definitely been a memorable one.

I don't have many updates since J-term is usually the slow part of the year, but I do want to share some ideas I have been thinking about.

1. Events for students who don't want to drink or go out. Choosing not to go out should not mean a lonely night in—which sometimes it does. If you have any ideas to improve the quantity or quality of events, feel free to reach out!

2. Ways to convince, incentivize, or even beg students to bring back their dining hall dishes. Dining spends so much money on the collection, cleaning, and throwing out of dining hall dishes every semester. That's money that can improve the quality of foods and even increase the types of foods we have access to in the dining halls.

3. Accessibility in the classroom. Whether it how books are purchased or how students experience lectures, we can continue to make strides in making sure all students have equal access to their education.

The past several months serving as you SGA president has definitely been rewarding, and I can't wait to see what next semester has to offer! As always, let me know if you have an questions or concerns.

Nia Robinson is the president of the Student Government Association and a member of the Middlebury College Class of 2019.

Where Do First-Generation Students Go?

By TRAVIS SANDERSON

If you have listened to Malcolm Gladwell's Revisionist History podcast, you may have heard the true story of a boy named Carlos. Carlos was a kid from a poor neighborhood in Los Angeles who found his way into opportunities usually available only to the upper class. The transition wasn't easy. He faced social instability, violence, and a string of foster homes, but he managed to keep his grades up enough to make it into an elite school. Carlos became one of a small minority of students in an elite environment who were not born into that space. But Gladwell does not comment on the question of how Carlos fared in that environment. What happens to Carlos once he arrives in the elite school? How does he remain hinged to his background, as a first-generation college student, as a child of the working class?

Carlos arrives in the elite private school in a long convoy of Sedans and Vans. It's Move-in Day. The lawn is swarmed with anxious parents and harassed first-years, one part eager, another part nervous to meet their roommates. Maybe that day he doesn't notice. He doesn't notice the differences between his classmates and himself until he's sitting in a seminar room with about four dozen fewer students than any of his classrooms back home. And the professor's asking them a question. Carlos's friend — you know, the type of friend that you latch onto during orientation before realizing you have nothing in common, but are doomed to endlessly greet with a fake smile and pleasantries — is sitting across the room. He's engaging the professor in light-hearted banter. Carlos didn't even know you could do that. Carlos had a select few teachers that served as mentors back home but they never talked about favorite skiing slopes. What even was the difference between cross-country and "Alpine" skiing?

Carlos is already behind. Not in coursework, but in something more important : networks. He thought of college as the next step in an academic journey — letter grades, deadlines. He bought into the brochures the college sent along with his admissions letter. His friend was almost ready to convert a conversation about ski techniques for a letter of recommendation while Carlos sat on the sidelines with nothing but a few A-'s on essays the professor didn't even return in time.

Carlos feels out of place. The people that live on his hall are no different than his friend in class: passionate, nice enough, but just not people that were easy to talk to. Holding a conversation in and of itself was an obstacle. Instead of competing in ski tournaments, or traveling in Nepal, Carlos took care of his little sister back home. He worked for a family restaurant late into the night. Not exactly an ice breaker. Most of his dormmates just say, "Oh, that must have been nice." They can't relate. That's not their fault.

When we talk about hinges, we must understood that some students are hinged to their background more than others. The past informs our future, but for Carlos, his past and future are at odds. Carlos stands at a three-forked road. All three roads are pretty barren, deserted, only a few footprints here and there. Maybe Carlos calls down one of the trails and asks one of the few other Carlos's on campus what to do. Maybe he gets advice. But ultimately, Carlos still finds himself alone at that fork. He has to decide himself.

The first road leads to integration. Carlos adopts the mannerisms and speech patterns, maybe even the fashion tastes, of his classmates. He learns how to hold a conversation about skiing and growing his hair long in Nepal. He becomes the affable and well-adjusted student that downplays his background in order to engage his professor in a discussion about Sartre that will eventually land him a stellar recommendation to his dream job at a corporate law firm that affords him a condo in a gentrified area of town. Carlos becomes his classmates.

The second road leads to family responsibility. Carlos realizes that his duty to his family is most important. That's why he's getting good grades in the first place, right? His little sister needs him. Performing well in these elite spaces can lead to a job where he makes enough money to get his sister to college, too. Carlos studies his classmates' social cues enough to land a job at a corporate firm. At the firm, he can earn enough money to lift his entire family out of the working class. Carlos becomes the family breadwinner.

The third road leads back the way he came. Carlos acquires a sense of alienation that propels him to consider the structural factors that make him so different and clueless in the elite private school. Convinced that following his own passion is selfish, Carlos makes the connections necessary to find a job that helps dismantle the system. His job at a nonprofit does not earn him enough money to radically change his family's conditions, but he hopes to make a bigger difference in society. Carlos becomes the activist.

These roads are not mutually exclusive. In his journey, Carlos might take one path, only to end up on another. Maybe Carlos the classmate donates regularly to organizations that help students like him apply to better schools. Maybe Carlos the family breadwinner hates the system, like the activist, and chooses to go to law school to eventually work in family law, earning both money and opportunities to help others in his same situation. There's an infinity of possibilities within the same three-forked road.

What remains static, however, is the fact that Carlos is hinged to his background in a way that his classmates are not. His past makes the future more difficult, starting with the three-forked road. And there is no guarantee that Carlos has the liberty to choose on the three-forked road at all. He will graduate college, tears streaming down his face, in the same gown as everyone else. He will hug his classmates. Then, he will start the job hunt. According to research by Hiring Learning Systems, 85 percent of jobs are never advertised. The vast majority of folks score jobs through tapping into their networks. These networks are not only the product of handshakes and Handshake, but also family connections. If the backdoor is the front-door, what about people like Carlos? What about folks whose network is a community of waiters and clerks back home? Does he even have the capacity to choose between the three roads when scoring any white-collar job at all is significantly more difficult for him than his classmates?

America was built on narratives of advancement and meritocracy. The college in and of itself is often sold as the vehicle of social mobility. We champion liberal arts slogans, but deep in our core, we are taught to believe that making it in college is making it in life. But for us working class kids, for those of us like Carlos, the callouses on our parents' hands and the lines on their temples are built deep into our identities. There are hinges that keep us tied to our past, to our rank, to our social class.

But let's assume Carlos has the choice. He is isolated and alone at the three-forked road. The three-forked road represents the obstacle that Carlos confronts by virtue of his background, one his classmates do not share. There's rarely a separate road for family responsibility or activism for his classmates. The three forks are integrated seamlessly into a highway to success for many folks on campus. Prep school, college, entry-level job, promising career: these are all expected signs that the children of the elite pass as they drive down the highway. The off-ramps to family responsibility and activism are easy to navigate. While Carlos is cutting his way through a jungle that not a single family member of his has ever traversed before with every financial aid paper that he desperately tries to understand, his classmates can drive on a freeway to their dreams.

Carlos represents many of us who find ourselves here in Middlebury who were not raised with silver spoons in our mouths. We are those around you with an unabiding social class anxiety, an impostor syndrome infecting our nerves. We walk across campus simultaneously blending in and standing out, but we are here. We are those who have a chance to become unhinged from our past, if we so choose.

When I was eleven, two of classmates discovered dismembered body parts in the desert lot next to our school. Those classmates came to class the next day, to write on textbooks thirty years old, in our classroom of fifty students. I'm sure the dismembered hand and torso beneath the tumbleweed still wakes them up at night, if they survived this long. Some classmates dropped out long before high school graduation; some fled to bootcamp; some sank into drug addiction to numb the suicidal impulses that shot through spines every time their mothers screamed at them from sofas. People "get by." This is by no means a summary of every first-generation experience; it is merely one story, one of many, a Carlos in the small minority on campus whose narratives are rarely heard.

For me, neither a high school diploma or a college degree were signs passed on the highway to success. Not me, someone who shares blood with generations of folks who never made it past eighth grade, people whose college experience may just include non-credit courses and night classes. Not me, whose friend back home still works two unstable jobs just to keep her family afloat. Not us named Carlos, whose parents torture themselves every year awaiting the fateful decision of Student Financial Services in calculating our financial aid. We earned our way onto this campus, but we emotionally prepare every semester to leave.

Those of us who are Carlos have already overcome so much. By the time we reach the three-forked road, we have already left many people on the road behind us. Friends of mine earned better grades than me, scored higher test scores than I did, and dreamed bigger and farther than me. But they had to stay behind to help their family's business survive. Their selfless choice cost them their best shot at social mobility, at the American Dream itself.

We are few in number, here, at Middlebury. Sixty percent of the student body belongs to the top one percent of income in the United States. But we are here, next to you, among you. We are Carlos. We face an obstacle that most of our classmates do not. We don't know whether we should become more like you or prioritize our family or turn back the way we came and change the system for the better. We don't know how to negotiate these hinges that keep us from fully integrating with the main student body on campus. We desperately wish to have the liberty to make that choice at all, but we will soon discover the job market may not be so forthcoming. But we will find a way. Whatever road we take, we will have made it farther than those who came before us. We will overcome on this long road. We will find a way to be content, to find meaning, to be happy.

In this world, to be happy in and of itself is a revolutionary act.

Travis Sanderson is a member of the Middlebury College class of 2019.

Is Our Meat Really So Bad?

A Meat-Lover's Vegetarian Apologia

By BEN BEESE

To the disgust of most of my friends, I love hamburgers. If you get me talking about food at all, I will almost surely tell you all about the Elk and Bison burger specialties of home, my dad's collection of photos of a young me trying to eat burgers twice the size of my head, the poverty of the dining hall's burgers, the right thickness and juiciness of a burger, the various accoutrements that go best with a burger, and what makes a burger great. I would love to break my vegetarian streak for a good burger but, before doing so, I wanted to find out what people's problem is with our meat here at Middlebury.

There are a lot of well supported reasons to go vegan or vegetarian. None of these are mine. Yet, as one whose friends fall overwhelmingly in those two categories, I have become familiar with many acceptable reasons to avoid meat. There are moral reasons, for example, not to kill or to exploit animals which can, and have, lead to interesting philosophical discussions of souls, violence, and like. There are often forgotten practical religious reasons for being vegetarian; when starved for kosher and halal options, vegetarian options may become an acceptable alternative. And there are environmental arguments for reducing meat consumption of which I have heard both challenges and impassioned defenses.

My motivation to be a vegetarian, on the other hand, is far from reasonable. Whether it was to prove that I can deny myself meat, to better understand vegetarians, an amusement at my own whims, or perhaps a secret desire to prove that vegetarianism at Middlebury isn't worth all the complaints it receives, I am not sure. All the same, on January 4, 2019, I gave up meat for a month with the vague thought of a bloody carnivorous celebration on February 1.

I quickly came to realize that my friend was right, being vegetarian "for the heck of it" is not the most compelling reason for such an undertaking and one does, in fact, need a good amount of motivation to avoid meat at every meal. Why is it that not one but both entrées at lunch and dinner include meat by default? I had, as I imagine many have, heard ad nauseam the complaint that there are not enough vegetarian options but little did I appreciate that one's daily meat-free options amount to bad tofu, rice, pasta, salad, or soup. Meanwhile, everyone else is enjoying their steaks, their stews, their hamburgers, their lamb, their gyros, their chicken (in so many different forms!), their salmon and fish, their hot dogs, their pepperoni pizzas, their meat-lovers' pizzas, their other not-cheese pizzas, their antipasti salads (with chicken, or bacon, or ham, or seafood), and the list goes on. The options for vegans are even more limited: a large amount of the vegetarian options include cheese (in our rice? Really?) or cream. It's not that vegetarians can't eat at Middlebury, the problem is that they are subjected to a Spartan dining experience in dining halls ranked #14 on Best Value School's Best Dining Halls of 2017-2018. That seems ridiculous.

I have also come to realize that it's not so difficult to be a vegetarian. Admittedly, I've taken the easiest possible route. I didn't start until I left home, so I never had to ask my family to accommodate me. Eating out, I've been almost entirely with one or another vegetarian or vegan friend so I know I never have to ask for special consideration with them either. I'm only committed to vegetarianism for a month, making the effort more a postponement rather than a rejection of a meat-based diet. I don't even advocate for the lifestyle. Try as I might, I have yet to be wholly convinced of the need or even the benefit of being vegan or vegetarian. But, admitting that there may be real health benefits, to ourselves or to our planet, or moral implications or any other benefit of not eating meat once in a while, perhaps it makes sense to hedge out bets and eat a little less meat. Heck! We eat 1.5 times the recommended daily protein per person at this school just via meat.

This is not a call to be a vegan monk. This is not another recommendation to watch Food Inc., or read such-and-such book about animals. But what if our meal plans didn't require we eat meat? What if it was an option, like pizza in Ross or ice cream in Proctor? The problem is not about having more vegetarian and vegan options; it's about making meat and animal products options. We should have the choice to choose not to eat something without sacrificing our dining experience, the diversity of our cuisine, or the ability to routinely enjoy eating on campus. As a meat-lover, wing-Wednesday-devotee, and burger-connoisseur, I, for one, am thrilled to see the new meat mitigation efforts and hope we all, vegans and carnivores alike, can continue to talk about how to have an accessible, productive, and well-crafted dining experience.

Ben Beese is a member of the Middlebury College class of 2021.5.

Staff Appreciation: Amy Holbrook

By GRACE VEDOCK

When you walk into Amy Holbrook's office, the first thing you notice are the pictures. On every wall in her office hang pictures of students and faculty – past and present – at restaurants, airports, and graduations. The next thing you'll notice are the trinkets – a hand mirror from Egypt, a saree from Pakistan, a magnet from Bulgaria, a ceramic ramen bowl from Japan. Then, you'll notice the cards – thank you notes, Christmas cards, postcards from around the world – from former faculty and students.

Then, you'll notice Amy, and she'll probably be happy to see you since she knows and remembers almost every student that walks into her office. Amy remembers what classes you took last semester and where home is for you; she'll ask how your girlfriend is doing and if you want candy; and she'll offer you a seat so you can chat with her.

Amy Holbrook is Middlebury's hidden gem. Tucked away in Warner 201, she comes early and stays late to her job as the Economics Department Coordinator. I am one of the many student workers she's hired over the years to work as her office associate. My first interaction with Amy just about sums up who she is as a person: open, caring, deeply personal, and fiercely genuine. I remember when, during my freshman year, I applied for the job and came into her office to interview. It was supposed to be brief; I assumed we'd talk about my resume and maybe the expectations for the job. I left her office an hour later after hearing about her life story, her three sons who she loves very much, her dog Bandit, and how much she loves her faculty (so much that she stocks their favorite candy in her candy jar. Professor Myers loves Swedish Fish and Professor Wunnava likes spearmint candy, but you didn't hear it from me).

COURTESY PHOTO

Amy isn't just generous; she's one of the hardest workers I know. In 2017, she received the Virtue Family Exceptional Service Award, which honors faculty and staff who have "gone above and beyond their normal professional responsibilities to support and connect with students in ways that build a more engaged and inclusive Middlebury community." For years, she has hosted international students at her home for Thanksgiving, she takes her host students bowling in Burlington on a regular basis, and she hasn't missed an ISO show. Amy has shown her students – Economics majors, host students, student workers, and friends – that they are important and that she cares about every single one of them.

Amy deserves more recognition than she gets. She works around the clock to make sure that students and faculty feel supported and appreciated, and as students, we should reciprocate those feelings. The Middlebury Community is so lucky to have Amy Holbrook. And, on a personal note, my Middlebury experience would be incomplete without her. She is more than my boss; she's a lifelong friend. If you've never had the pleasure of meeting Amy, please venture down to Warner 201 and do so immediately. I guarantee she'll be happy to see you.

Grace Vedock is a member of the Middlebury College class of 2020.

Faculty Retirement Program: 'The End Comes as a Choice'

By APRIL QIAN
Arts & Academics Editor

After 44 years of teaching at Middlebury College, Tom Beyer will be retiring from his teaching responsibilities after the 2019-2020 academic year. As of this past Monday, he is one of 23 faculty members who have signed agreements to participate in the Faculty Retirement Incentive Program (FRIP).

In an email to all employees last June, President Laurie L. Patton announced the introduction of a set of elective, incentive-based retirement and separation plans for faculty in Middlebury and Monterey as part of the college's workforce planning effort for both faculty and staff. This later developed into FRIP.

The college will save money from FRIP despite the total number of faculty remaining largely the same over the next few years. Because new, tenure-track faculty can be paid lower salaries than long-tenured professors, this series of faculty replacements will result in significant savings. According to Dean of Faculty Andi Lloyd, if all of the retiring faculty members were replaced, projections suggest that savings from this program could fall between $2 million and $2.5 million over the next several years.

The 117 members of the college faculty eligible for the program all have contract end dates later than July 1, 2021, and have worked in a benefits-eligible position for at least 10 years after age 45, according to the Office of Finance and Administration. The FRIP package will include a year's salary and the establishment of a Health Reimbursement Account, as well as funds for scholarship and research for up to three years after retirement.

In general, Beyer, the CV Starr Professor of Russian & East European Studies, is pleased with the program. In comparison to a similar incentivized retirement program offered in 2008, which offered "one date, one payout," and carried with it potentially "adverse tax implications," the current program is "very flexible and thoughtfully cast," Beyer said.

Beyer opted for the latest of his three options for retirement dates under FRIP: June 2019, December 2019 and June 2020. He explained that the program's relatively early announcement relative to its implementation gave faculty enough time to examine the program's "implications for their teaching, the implications for their scholarship and also the financial implications of the program."

Assuming most departments hire new faculty to replace retiring faculty, the FRIP process is not expected to decrease overall teaching force at the college. As faculty leave Middlebury at a staggered pace, college officials expect that within three years, the total number will remain about the same as it is today.

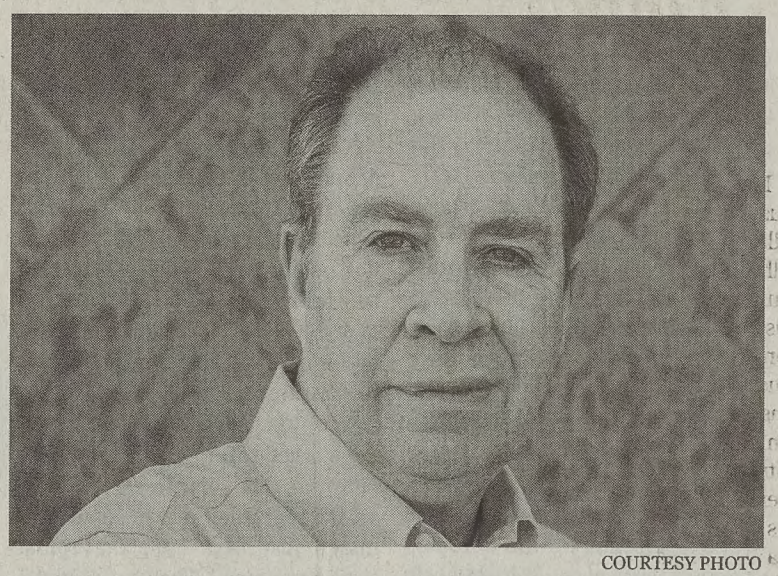
Having advance warning of a faculty member's retirement six to eighteen months ahead allows a department to "re-examine its own missions, goals, and possibilities for the future," Beyer said.

In the Biology department this year, for example, students received emails requesting their participation in the department's hiring process for a new faculty member to replace a retiring tenured professor in aquatic ecology. This process began a year in advance of the professor's retirement and involved a series of research talks and teaching demonstrations by visiting candidates for the position throughout the fall semester.

> ***"So much of our lives at Middlebury is defined by our relationship with and our connection with students. So of course, student interaction is something that I'll miss."***

"I think that [FRIP] gives an opportunity in particular to younger colleagues who aspire to tenure, to feel like there is a place for them," Beyer said.

Newer faculty fresh out of graduate school "are aware of the latest and most up to date research in a whole variety of areas," Beyer said. When Beyer first received his Ph.D. in Slavic Languages and Literatures, he was "much more of a generalist and was aware of the latest work in critical theory and writing."



COURTESY PHOTO
Russian Professor Tom Beyer has been at Middlebury since 1975 and will be taking an early retirement in 2020.

"After tenure, one becomes a bit more specific in the area in which they look at," he said.

The ability to "teach the courses I really want to teach, one more time; to read the books I want to read, one more time," was important to Beyer, who plans to teach a course on the Russian author Fyodor Dostoyevsky and another on 20th century Russian writers in the coming fall term.

"So much of our lives at Middlebury is defined by our relationship with and our connection with students," Beyer said. "So of course student interaction is something that I'll miss."

For Beyer, however, ceasing his teaching responsibilities in the classroom also provides an opportunity to focus on his own research agenda, which he calls his scholarly "bucket list."

"We were aware that the decisions that faculty make about retiring reflect both financial considerations and, in many cases, an interest in continuing to be productive scholars and to remain connected to their scholarly communities, here and elsewhere," Lloyd said. FRIP's enrichment fund, she said, was designed to allow faculty to continue their scholarly endeavors after retirement.

Continuing research after retirement, for Beyer, also means that "my connection with the college, with my scholarship, and with the projects that I have doesn't come to an abrupt end." Continued office space for one year after retirement, Beyer said, was "particularly important for me and, I suspect, for my other colleagues who exercise this option, to put their scholarly life in order and in perspective."

"All things come to an end at some time," Beyer said. "Here the end comes, as it were, as a choice."

'I Teach Them How to Do Their Jobs': The Careers of Coordinators

By YVETTE SHI
Arts & Academics Editor

The Department of Economics is recruiting for three faculty positions, and its coordinator Amy Holbrook has barely been able to leave her office since the start of J-term due to the amount of work she has. Holbrook is helping to bring in nine candidates in three weeks and has to organize all their travel logistics and schedules on campus, a process that she described as "fast and furious."

"I haven't left my office for the past two and a half weeks even to get lunch," Holbrook said. "My faculty have been bringing me food and drinks."

Scrolling down her packed email inbox, Holbrook explained that recruiting new faculty marks the busiest time of her year and is probably one of the most important parts of her job. She has been working as academic coordinator for the department since 1997, and her job responsibilities range from working on course catalogues to helping students declare their majors.

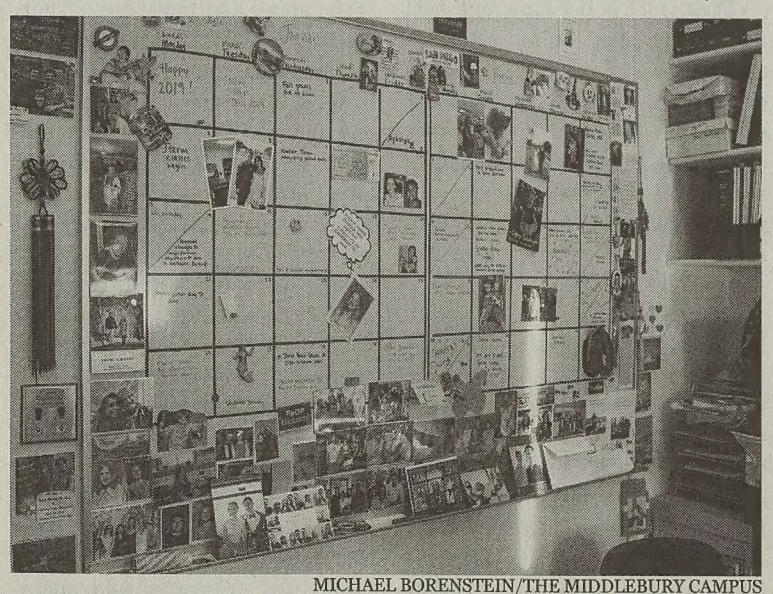
While there are more than 100 senior Economics majors graduating every year, the academic departments and programs vary greatly in size — and so do the job responsibilities of each coordinator.

MICHAEL BORENSTEIN/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS
Economics Department Academic Coordinator Amy Holbrook has held her current position since 1997.

"I don't think that you could just say, 'This is your job description, now only do those things,' because that's not really what this job is," said Michaela Davico, coordinator for the Dance department and History of Art and Architecture. "You always have to be a little bit flexible to do what comes your way."

The flexibility is part of what drew Megan Curran, coordinator for the architectural studies and studio art programs, to the job in the first place in 2015. She said that the flexible hours have been beneficial for her family and work life.

"I have a very good relationship with my faculty, where I can have conversations with them about what they are allowed to ask of me and what they are not," Curran said, adding that a lack of such communication for other coordinators, who have been at times asked to perform jobs outside their responsibilities, such as physical tasks, and that there are some coordinators who might not feel comfortable doing the same.



MICHAEL BORENSTEIN/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS
Holbrook's eye-catching calendar is packed full of postcards, photos and notes from students and faculty.

"I TEACH THEM HOW TO DO THEIR JOBS"

Holbrook said that her faculty members are extremely supportive. "I consider them family at this point," she said. "But I don't do their jobs for them, and I want that made very clear. I teach them how to do their jobs so I can do mine."

This past fall has been especially intense for Curran. Besides the faculty recruitment and the normal academic workflow of the entire year that makes fall the busiest, she said that the ongoing workforce planning process became another source of stress.

Throughout the past semester, the group of more than 20 academic coordinators have been having multiple meetings with Dean of Curriculum Susan Gurland.

"[Gurland] has been providing us with information that she's been given, and she's been very open and honest with the conversations that we've been having regarding the workforce planning," Curran said, explaining that the meetings initially "had this very intense environment" because a lot was unknown.

The academic coordinators were notified of the workforce planning situation last July, and expect steps will be taken in March or April. (For more information on staff workforce planning, see Page 1.) Judy Olinick, coordinator for the Japanese, German and Russian departments, said that it has been a difficult wait.

"It's very hard to tell what's going to happen," Olinick said. "It's really disturbing to people, to the staff, to have to go through this whole year and go through Christmas and New Year and not be sure they are going to have their jobs in July."

According to Olinick, it is a consensus among coordinators that the structure of their jobs should essentially stay unchanged, with each department and program being identified with one specific coordinator.

"The departments are unique in how they function," Holbrook said. "And you really need to have a coordinator for each individual department, because they know details about that that are important to the efficiency of running that department."

"OH HONEY, I CAN'T"

Davico, who started working for Dance and History of Art and Architecture in 2014, said it has taken her almost all of the past four years to master the learning curve of the position, because there are responsibilities that only need to be carried out once or twice each year. She has also had student workers who help with social media and other tasks.

Interaction between academic coordinators and students varies, depending on factors like the size of the department or program. As the coordinator for the largest department on campus, Holbrook hires student office associates, who usually stay on the job throughout their college careers. Political science major Grace Vedock '20 has been working for Holbrook since her first year, helping with data entry, filing and event planning.

Vedock has developed a close relationship with Holbrook, much like many students in and out of the department have.

"It's really common for students walking by Warner, and just come by Amy's office and sit down. The candy jar really draws people in," Vedock said. "It makes sense with Economics majors, but then there's just a bunch of Amy-fans that just know her for some reason or another."

Holbrook used to organize Thanksgiving dinners for major students who stay on campus during the break, which gradually increased in size and ended up needing college van rentals. Students would gather in her house to enjoy a big dinner, music and games.

"I think it's because I'm pretty much an open book — I'm honest about myself and my own life, and I think students feel comfortable around that," Holbrook said. "I sort of humanize things, so then they open up and they share things with me. I think in the day-to-day Middlebury experience, they're not seeing a lot of that."

Last semester, Holbrook took an introductory French course, where she also made many friends. One of the many first-years and sophomores in the class was planning to declare a major in Economics, and asked Holbrook if she could be his advisor.

"It was so sweet. I'm like, 'Oh honey, I can't, but let's walk and I'll tell you why,'" Holbrook recalled. "I set him up with another faculty member."

The whiteboard calendar on one of Holbrook's office walls is decorated with magnets, photos, postcards and artifacts brought back from all over the world by students and faculty, who continue to be Holbrook's favorite part about her job.

"I don't think that people at Middlebury, staff especially, get recognized, or how integral they are in the running of Middlebury College," she said. "Everyone is intertwined here. Everyone is connected."

DON'T MISS THIS

The Dance Company of Middlebury "Warrior Work: Show Up. Tell the Truth."
Warrior Work results from research by the company teaching and performing in a variety of communities, using dance as a platform for personal truth-telling and bridge building. Directed by Lida Winfield in collaboration with Aysha Upchurch and the company members.

Friday, January 25, 2019, 7:30 – 9 p.m.
Mahaney Arts Center Dance Theatre

Hale County This Morning, This Evening
An intimate portrait of a place and its people, Hale County This Morning, This Evening looks at the lives of two young African American men from rural Alabama over the course of five years, as one attends college in search of opportunity and the other becomes a father to an energetic son.

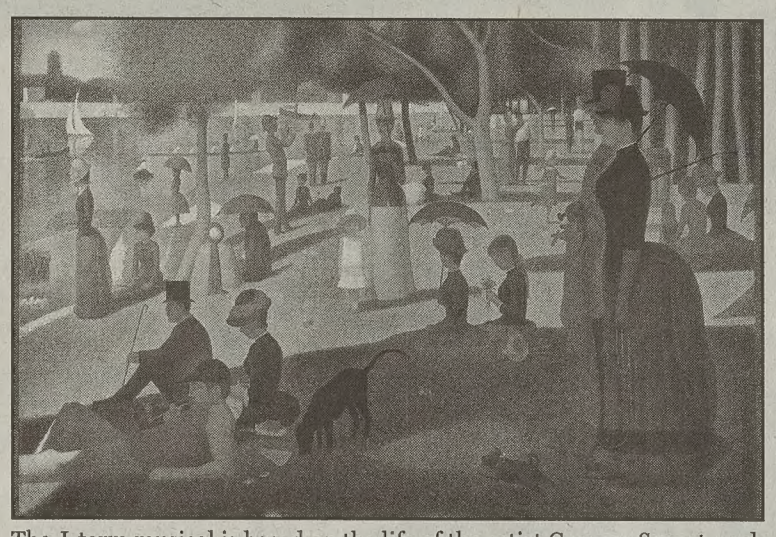
Saturday, January 26, 2019, 3 – 6 p.m.
Dana Auditorium (Sunderland Language Center)

Manual Cinema, The End of TV
Using vintage overhead projectors, multiple screens, puppets, actors, live-feed cameras, multichannel sound design and a live music ensemble, Manual Cinema transforms the experience of attending the movies into an immersive event created right before your eyes.

Wednesday, January 30, 2019, 7:30 – 9:30 p.m.
Wright Theatre

J-Term Musical Explores the Ordinary in an Extraordinary Way

By RILEY BOARD
Arts & Academics Editor



The J-term musical is based on the life of the artist Georges Seurat, and the creation of his famous painting "A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of Le Grande Jatte."

Now in its 14th year, the J-Term musical, a collaboration between the college and the Town Hall Theater, will present Stephen Sondheim's "Sunday in the Park with George" this weekend. The musical production began in 2004 when Applied Music Faculty member Carol Christensen teamed up with Doug Anderson of the Town Hall Theater, and initially had a cast of six. However, over a decade later, the production has grown into a company of 22, and is a significant cultural event for the Middlebury community, within both the college and the town.

The musical fictitiously recounts the life of Georges Seurat, the 19th century French painter, and, as Christensen puts it, "his struggle with the demands of his art and its impact on his relationships, as he created his legendary painting, 'A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of Le Grande Jatte.'" The two lead roles in the musical have been double cast, and Seurat will be played on alternating nights by Zach Varricchione '21 and Michael Koutelos '20, while his love interest Dot will be played by Olivia Christie '19 and Ashley Fink '19.

This particular musical is not the most well-known or popular, but according to Christensen, who serves as the Musical Director, and the cast, it is an impactful and exciting production with a unique score. "I'd say of all the musical scores I have played in the past 15 years, this particular Sondheim score is perhaps the most stunningly beautiful," she said.

The musical provides Middlebury students with a unique opportunity to interact with residents of the town, and in its 14 years of production, the show has become a staple of entertainment in the community — in fact, all of the tickets often sell out within one day. Anderson, who serves as stage director for the show, notes that the musical is "one of the places where the school and the town community come together."

"My whole staff here are local, but for three weeks in January, this building is full of both students and local people," he said. "And that coming together of town and gown is what makes this special, and what makes it so enormously popular."

Fink, who plays Dot, believes there is a lot for audiences to be excited about. "There will be wonderful choral numbers of the entire cast singing, which have so much power and spirit," she said. "[Audiences] will be learning something about the prominent painter Georges Seurat, hearing great music, and hearing a story they can relate to."

Both Fink and Christie, who also plays Dot, have been in four J-term musicals over the years, and this will be their last. "I'm feeling like I've come full circle," Christie said.

Varricchione, who plays George, and Christie's on-stage chemistry dates back to his first year of high school, where they performed in show choir together. The two remain close friends and have appreciated working opposite each other.

"I've been having a lot of fun working with Zach, he's one of my best friends and it's been great working on something so intense with him," Christie said. "We support each other in real life, not just on stage, so that's been really fruitful."

All of the cast members noted how much of a challenge the music of Sondheim is to learn and perform. This particular production is also challenging because of the limited time frame that the cast has to rehearse — students begin rehearsing the music in fall semester with Christensen, but cannot begin staging the show until J-term, giving them less than three weeks to pull everything together.

"On the Monday before the Friday opening you always think 'we'll never open.' But I've learned that these performers are very sharp people," Anderson said. "I've been immensely proud of every single one of them, and I'm sure this will be success."

"Sunday in the Park with George" is not a musical many are familiar with, but Christensen believes that audiences will see themselves in the show and consider how their own "passion for creativity" influences their experience of life, as it did for Seurat.

"The core of the show is about finding beauty in the most ordinary things and being reminded why we create art. It shows characters that we all either know in our own lives or identify with personally and it evokes an emotional response," Varricchione said. "It's been so fun exploring the ordinary in an extraordinary way."

All of the performances are sold out, but students can still see "Sunday in the Park with George" tonight, Thursday, Jan. 24. There is a suggested donation of five dollars per student, 10 for adults, and ticket sales will begin at 6:30 p.m. Those still interested in seeing the performances can call the Town Hall Theater to be added to the waitlist.

In Class, Students Simulate 2020 Election

By BEN BEESE
Staff Writer

Sen. Kamala Harris is one of the candidates represented in Ben Wessel's J-term course Winning Elections.

"Decisions are made by those who show up." Such is the idea behind representative democracy. The perennial stress of American politics, one could say, is the lack of control and representation, that the government does not listen to us and, when it does, it listens to the masses with whom we disagree. And yet, on occasion, we have the opportunity, one might even say the obligation, to cast our ballots and elect our leaders. Although there is no election in the immediate future, there is still a current opportunity to influence the future of our government.

The students of J-term course Winning Elections, taught by alumnus Ben Wessel '11.5, are running campaigns for six declared democratic candidates for the 2020 presidential election with the purpose of getting Middlebury students and community members to vote in their straw poll on Jan. 30. The data from this straw poll will be shared with the actual campaigns of each of these six candidates as well as with whomever the students of the course see fit.

Inspired in part by the Supreme Court simulation in political science professor Murray Dry's Constitutional Law course, Wessel's course is more than just an educational simulation. "Middlebury," he says, "is demographically very similar to other critical towns in Iowa and New Hampshire." This straw poll will provide some of the first data points on how young voters view the democratic candidates.

"This point in election season is based a lot on the whims of reporters," Wessel said. "Even if a few people in New Hampshire talk about it, that could have a huge impact."

This amplification of young voices, Wessel hopes, will inspire the candidates and their campaigns to take young voters more seriously, giving them data to better focus their outreach to communities like ours. Everyone is highly encouraged to vote: more votes correspond to more useful and thus more important data collected from the poll.

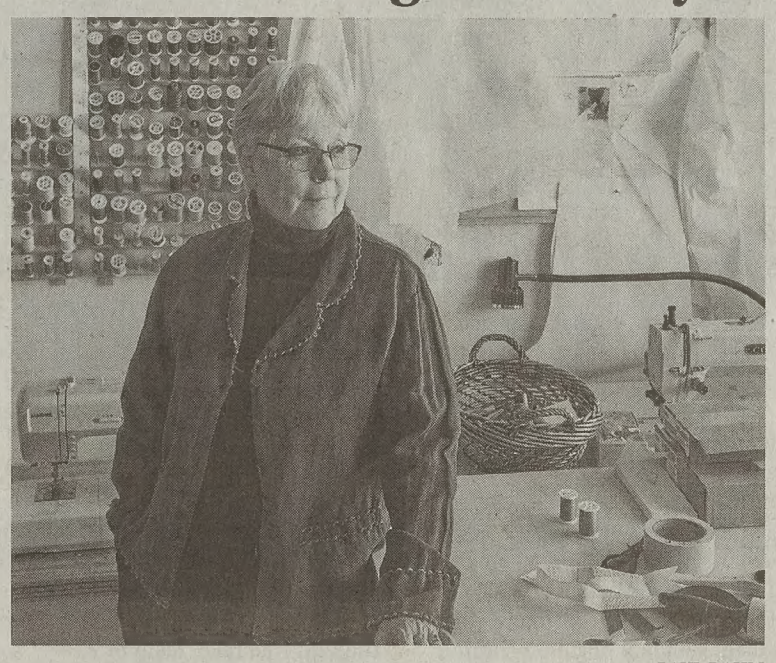
The course consists of readings and discussions about various aspects of a campaign, calls with people involved in former political campaigns and lots of time for the students to work on their own strategies. Lily Colón '21.5, co-leader of Kamala Harris' campaign, said her team is "planning on canvassing the entire college and select parts of town." They also, "have stickers, shirts and posters to help with name recognition."

Wessel mentioned that other teams' ideas have included playing ads at the Marquis, getting voter commitment cards and running an Instagram account dedicated to their campaign. "Only other young people know how to reach young people," he said. Campaigns are being run for Kamala Harris, Joe Biden, Cory Booker, Bernie Sanders, Elizabeth Warren and Beto O'Rourke. When asked about her confidence in her candidate, Colón said: "I think it will be an uphill battle here in Vermont where Bernie is also in the race but I do think Kamala's policy goals align well with what Vermont needs and so in that aspect I think we have a leg up."

Early voting begins on Jan. 28 with ballot drop-offs in the McCardell Bicentennial Hall, in town and in Crossroads, among other places. Campaigns may also be collecting ballots outside of Proctor dining hall. On Jan. 30, the voting will be held with ballot collection in Crossroads from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Voting is open to students and Middlebury community members.

Costume Shop Director Marcia Provoncha: A 'Source of Light and Joy'

By QIAN LI
Staff Writer



PAUL DAHM

Costume Shop Director Marcia Provoncha is in her element among spools of threads.

Marcia Provoncha has started her work day the same way for 14 years — checking her emails, especially those from students — to keep up with the demands of her role as Middlebury's Costume Shop director.

Born in Hartford, Connecticut, Provoncha moved to Vermont with her parents when she was three and has lived most of her life here ever since. After learning how to sew in high school, Provoncha went to college for a couple of years, but decided to drop out because of financial reasons. Starting off at a local sewing studio for five years, Provoncha picked up finer sewing skills from the woman she was working for, and was later hired to manage another local weaving and sewing studio, where she stayed for another fifteen years before coming to Middlebury.

When there was a part-time job opening at the college, Provoncha did not feel confident that she would qualify. Despite her concerns about sewing costumes and about not having a higher educational background, Provoncha eventually gave it a try and applied for the job.

"They called me in for an interview and they wanted me to bring in things I had made, so I did, and they looked them all over and everything. Two days later, they called me and offered me the job," Provoncha said.

Arriving at Middlebury with extensive experience in sewing garments for people, Provoncha discovered a totally different world in making costumes. Rather than a straightforward process of taking measurements, doing a mock-up, making slight adjustments, and then sewing the garment from beginning to end, making costumes is full of complex intricacies.

After completing all of these steps on a costume design, Provoncha has to wait for another round of fitting to make sure that every small piece of a costume is exactly where they should be, i.e. sleeves nicely sitting on the shoulders rather than dangling from a lower spot.

"You put the collar on after that. Closures, buttons, zippers, all that kind of stuff is last. And that's not always the case when you are making one for someone who is not an actor," Provoncha explained. "Another difference is that you leave a lot of seam allowances. Because you usually use those garments more than once on more than one actor, you want to make sure you have enough fabric in hand to let that garment out for a bigger person."

Overseeing four major theater productions every year as well as managing costumes for the annual J-term musicals, providing help for student projects and various shows during summer language schools, supporting anyone from the school who needs costumes, Provoncha has become a walking costume carousel in the past fourteen years.

As someone randomly picks up a costume from thousands of the stock pieces hanging and turning downstairs on a carousel, Provoncha could easily tell you who wore it during what show, and even the size of it.

When asked about her secret, Provoncha said, "If you work on a garment so many times, you won't forget."

Every time there was a new theater production, it started a brand-new journey for Provoncha. The first show she worked on at Middlebury was "The Bewitched," which takes place in the 1600s. The show only used period clothing, which involved corsets, bum rolls, great big dresses with huge hands for female characters and very fitted ornate costumes for males.

"That was probably one of my favorite shows. I love sewing period clothes. They are much more interesting than modern clothes," Provoncha said. "Another one I loved working on for probably the opposite reason was called 'St. Crispin's Day.'"

With the story taking place in medieval times, the costumes had to look like medieval garments despite the fact that they were made new and fresh for the show.

"So, you are cutting them out, making them look brand new, and then you have to distress them to make them look like somebody has worn them for fifty years. So, you put holes on them on purpose, and you get them all dirty and ragged looking. [...] They all looked great, and they all looked crappy," Provoncha said.

Occasionally, there were challenging costumes, and that was when the costume shop became a place of magic that turned the impossible into something that was real and beautiful.

Back in the spring of 2011, the costume designer for the production "Eurydice" had pictured for three of the female characters to be covered in all grey with dead babies or teddy bears.

"I ordered all of these baby dolls from a toy store. Then we sat in the costume shop, took them all apart, taking off the legs, arms, and heads, and we had to spray paint them all," said Provoncha.

As thick as a baby doll could be, it was a great amount of work for Provoncha and the people working at the costume shop to sew each of the baby dolls onto a fat suit three times.

"They were amazing looking when they were done, but to keep sewing over and over again, trying to push a needle through a rubber baby doll into something else and making sure that it was secure was tough," said Provoncha.

Stepping into her fourteenth and last year working at Middlebury, Provoncha said working with students was the highlight of her job. Not only the students who work and help out at the costume shop or the sewing studio, but also the ones who come in for fittings or who simply walk in for help in costumes.

Olivia Christie '19, a theater major from Fairfield, Vermont who started interacting with Provoncha as a student actress during her first semester and then began working at the costume shop two years ago, described Provoncha as "a source of light and joy."

"She taught me a lot of things to do with sewing, but a lot of her influence comes from just how kind she is," Christie said. "She really cares about all of the students that come through, and that's rare to have someone who is so ready and willing to be supportive, help you out, and do you a favor."

Sophia (Ningxuan) Dong '21, an IGS major from Ningbo, China, just started to work at the costume shop last fall. Besides feeling the serious and responsible side of Provoncha when working, Dong thought Provoncha more "like a grandmother," who would listen to anything you say.

"She would give you candies. Sometimes, she treats you like a child. But that's pretty cool because you just feel like you grow this type of bond with her and you would not be willing to disappoint her," Dong said.

While looking forward to spending time gardening, visiting her children, and camping and travelling with her husband after retiring in May, Provoncha said the part she would miss the most was working with the students.

"The students keep me young. We listen to music all the time in the shop. That's how I get to know who the latest bands are and everything. And to teach them something they don't know how to do, and they are so proud that they have done that. That's definitely the best part of the job," Provoncha said.

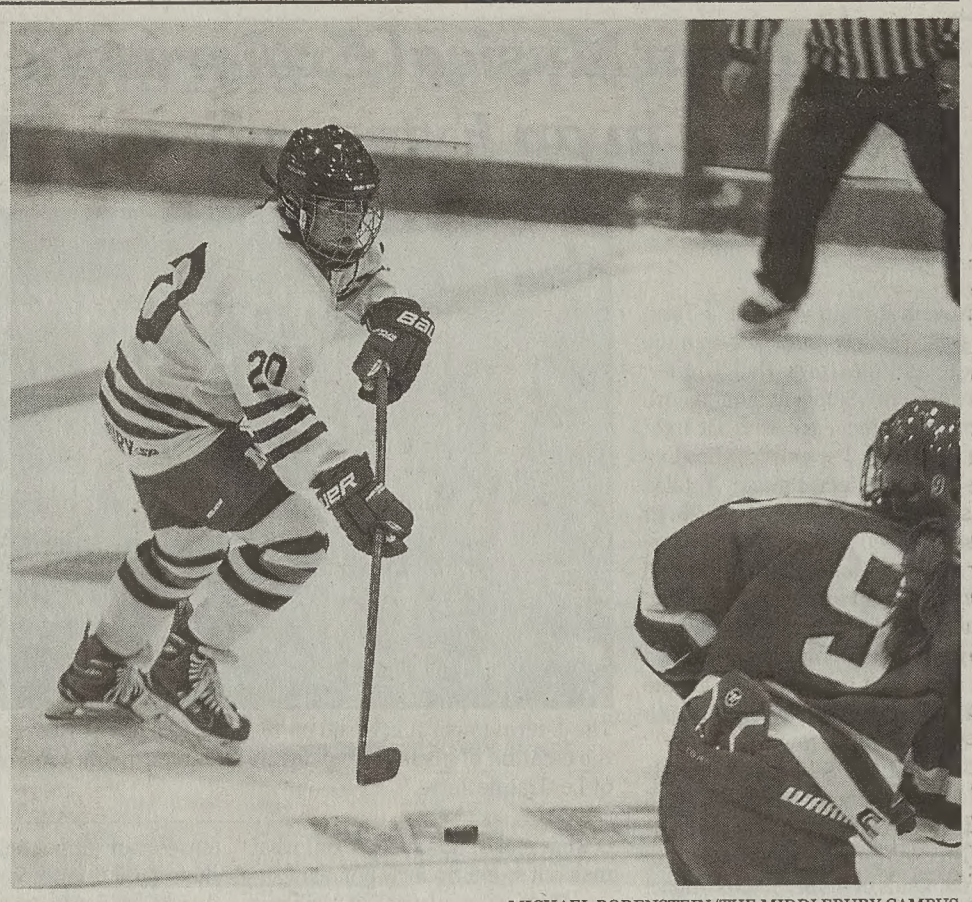
"I just really enjoyed working with Marcia over the past four years, and I think a lot of people would say the same thing," Christie said. "She just really cares about her students and about everybody's well-being, which is really nice in a crazy competitive fast-paced place like Middlebury to have someone who is so there for you on the individual level."

COURTESY PHOTO

For the "Eurydice" production in 2011, Provoncha incorporated baby dolls into the costume.

MICHAEL BORENSTEIN/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

The women's hockey team celebrates after Anna Zumwinkle '20 scores a goal against UMass Boston.



MICHAEL BORENSTEIN/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

Senior captain Jenna Marotta achieved one assist against UMass Boston on Saturday, Jan. 12.

Women's Hockey Splits Polar Bear Weekend

By BRIANNA LIPP
Staff Writer

The Middlebury women's hockey team battled the Bowdoin Polar Bears in a fierce NESCAC double header on Friday and Saturday, Jan. 18 and 19. Saturday's game began with a scoreless first period, though the Panthers had the shot advantage 11-6. In the second period, Middlebury opened scoring with just under five minutes off the clock. Sophomore Ellie Barney tipped a shot from junior defenseman Anna Zumwinkle behind the Bowdoin goalie for her second goal of the season. The Polar Bears evened the score as Angelina Joyce took a shot from her own rebound and sent it past junior goaltender Lin Han. The goal ended a scoreless streak for the Middlebury defense that had lasted 155:58. In the third period, Middlebury scored early, less than two minutes in, as sophomore Morgan Griffin forced a turnover in the offensive zone and sent the puck to the back of the Bowdoin net. First-year Jenna Letterie added the insurance goal 10 minutes later with a tap in off another Zumwinkle shot.

On Sunday, an unbeaten streak of nine games ended for the Panthers as an overtime goal lifted Bowdoin to victory. Once again, the first period ended with zeros on the scoreboard, despite Middlebury sending some tough shots toward Bowdoin goalie Kerri St. Denis. Middlebury held the shots advantage 13-3 as the second period opened, but the Polar Bears scored first. Taking advantage of a power play opportunity, Bowdoin's Miranda Bell sent a shot past sophomore Anna Goldstein. Middlebury tied the game up with 2:48 remaining in the second. Sophomore Madie Leidt sent a breakaway pass from the Panthers' blue line up to Letterie, who rifled a shot top-shelf over St. Denis' shoulder. The third period was also scoreless, though a point-blank shot from Middlebury's Katherine Jackson '19 was denied by St. Denis with just under four minutes remaining. In overtime, Bowdoin had the only two shots and scored with only 32 seconds remaining to secure the win. Bell sent a puck into traffic in front of the net that rebounded and got past Goldstein. Middlebury had the distinct shot advantage at 38-14, but Bowdoin's St. Denis stood tall all game and only let one through.

Middlebury's next challenge comes in a two-game home set against Hamilton on Friday and Saturday, Jan. 25 and 26. The Panthers, ranked first in the NESCAC, should expect a fight against the Continentals, who rank second and have won their past two games.

Men's Hockey Faces Tough Loss but Overcome with Big Win

By JENNY LANGERMAN
Senior Writer

The Panthers finish the week with split results; Friday's game against Colby brought a tough 4-3 loss, while hard work on Saturday culminated in an important 6-3 win over Bowdoin.

Middlebury's future held much uncertainty as the Panthers began the weekend's matchups. Both Colby and Bowdoin are significant in that they share the NESCAC conference with the Panthers as well as similar records heading into the games.

"The league has been very tight all year long, so every point in the standings matters. Making sure that we play a consistent and steady game will certainly be key in beating some of our biggest league rivals," senior captain Jimmy McKee said.

Despite the final outcome, the team certainly held its own against Colby. Play was evenly back and forth throughout, until Colby's final goal in the third period was enough to break the tie and edge out Middlebury for an unfortunate defeat. Saturday, however, the Panthers came back out onto the ice hungry. Although they put up a good fight, the Polar Bears ultimately struggled to match the Panthers and crumbled in the third period, letting up three goals.

After a midweek game against Norwich, the Panthers will travel this weekend to Connecticut College and then Tufts to try their luck against two more NESCAC teams on the road.

BENJY RENTON/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

Alex Heinritz '21 scored a goal in the second period against Colby on Friday, Jan. 18.

Swimming & Diving Defeats Union by 100+ Points

By ANNA WOOD
Staff Writer

On the road last Saturday, the swimming and diving teams conquered Union by an overwhelming 194-87 on the women's side and 190-76 on the men's side.

The women's team beat Union to the wall in 11 out of the 15 events that day. The 200 medley relay quartet of Frances Vandermeer '20, Erin Kelly '21, Maddie McKean '22 and Audrey Hsi '22 started the meet with a winning time of 1:52.73. The four competitors also collected individual wins in their respective events. Vandermeer claimed the 100 backstroke (1:00.41) and 100 freestyle (55.27). In the 100 breastroke, Kelly triumphed with a 1:11.38. Hsi sprinted to first in the 50 freestyle, swimming 25.74. Finally, McKean flew through the 100 butterfly to win in 1:00.94.

Other top scoring finishes came from Jessica Lipton '20 in the 200 butterfly (2:18.16), Hannah Wander '22 in the 200 breaststroke (2:35.12), Georgia Houde '20 in the 500 freestyle (5:23.73), and Grace Stimson '19 in the 200 individual medley (2:14.79).

To end the successful day, the 200 free relay squad of Courtney Gantt '22, Erin Kelly, Audrey Kelly '21 and McKean stopped the clock at 1:42.58, beating Union by several seconds.

The men's side saw similar results, dominating 12 out of the 15 events. The 200-meter medley relay team of Brendan Leech '19, Bryan Chang '22, Will Pannos '20 and Jake Gaughan '22 won in 1:40.75, immediately putting Middlebury ahead of the Dutchmen. From there, the Panthers kept building momentum.

Morgan Matsuda '19 totaled three wins in the 200 freestyle (1:47.89), 200 breaststroke (2:13.79), and 200 individual medley (2:02.33), while Corey Jalbert '21 out-touched the rest of the pool in both the 50 free (22.30) and 100 free (49.44).

Four other swimmers also claimed their individual events: Leech in the 100 backstroke (54.56), Cody Kim '22 in the 100 breaststroke (1:02.07), Kevin Santoro '21 in the 200 backstroke (2:01.80) and Aska Matsuda '22 in the 500 free (4:53.01). Diver Mike Chirico '20 was victorious in the three-meter event, scoring 270.98 points.

The 200 free relay team of Keegan Pando '21, Alex Corda '20, Leech and Gaughan earned the final points of the day, capping off the meet with a 1:29.72 win.

Before the championship season begins, the Panthers look to secure a couple more wins and fine tune technique. "We're trying to mimic races in practice and make ourselves feel fast," Leech said.

"We're really hoping to move up at the end-of-season NESCAC meet. Looking ahead, we're really focused on getting strong times to feel good about heading into NESCACs. We have a very large class of first-years who have been working hard all season, and we're excited to see what we can do at the end of the season," he continued.

The Panthers return to the Natatorium this weekend, where they will host Hamilton and Williams in their final dual meets of the season.

Women's Basketball Dominates as Starters Double Up

By LAUREN BOYD
Senior Writer

The most recent NESCAC women's basketball rankings place the Middlebury Panthers in third out of the 11 teams, behind Amherst and Bowdoin, after beating the Williams Ephs 76-62 last Saturday. The Panthers move to an overall 15-2 record, 4-1 in the NESCAC conference.

Williams is ranked in a three-way tie for sixth in NESCAC standings with Conn. College and Wesleyan, just one loss behind Trinity.

Last week, junior forward Vanessa Young emphasized the team's desire to work on their defensive game to ensure success in the latter part of the regular season. Saturday's contest was a testament to this improvement, alongside depth and teamwork in the Panthers' offensive game.

MICHAEL BORENSTEIN/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

Colleen Cavaney '19 breaks through defenders, hitting 17 points against Williams on Saturday, Jan. 19.

On Saturday, all five Middlebury starters put up impressive points (four out of five hitting double digits) to combine for the Panther win. Betsy Knox '20 (nine points), Catherine Harrison '19 (15 points), Alex Huffman '19 (11 points), Colleen Cavaney '19 (17 points) and Kira Waldman '20 (14 points) accounted for 66 out of the Panthers' 76 points.

Middlebury controlled the paint and demonstrated its offensive strength against the Ephs this week, proving the Panthers are a force to be reckoned with within the conference. Williams scored only 26 points in the paint compared to the Panthers' 40 points. Midd further proved its offensive dominance as the Panthers hit a 57.7 percent field goal percentage.

Though this past week exemplified the Panthers' strength as a team, Knox knows there is more work to be done heading into the later part of the season.

"As a team, we want to continue to eliminate our mistakes. We want to be a great team, and to do that we need to put together 40 minutes of great basketball. We are already really close off the court, but we are working hard to improve our on-court chemistry as well," Knox said.

Moving forward, there are only two non-conference teams left to play before the Panthers close out the regular season against NESCAC competitors Trinity, Bowdoin, Colby, Hamilton and Amherst. With these games, the Panthers will be able to keep refining their defense and offense, and improve their standing at both the conference and national level.

Knox acknowledges that the upcoming games are important but the team is ready for the competition ahead.

"All of our games coming up are big games. As a fairly veteran team, we have learned that every team in the NESCAC is good and has the capacity to beat any other team on any given day," Knox said. "To win we have to play well — nothing will be handed to us at this point. We have two non-conference matchups this week, which are also big for us. We need to play well so we can make NCAAs."

Individual Performances Highlighted at Winterfell

By JORDAN HOWELL
Senior Writer

The Middlebury Winterfell took place this past weekend on Saturday, Jan. 19 on home turf. The team continued its strong start with bold performances from both the men and the women.

"The team's goal right now is the same as every year, I feel. To get as many people to qualify for championship meets like DIII New Englands, Open New Englands, and Nationals, have everyone healthy to compete hard in outdoor, and keep the morale and spirit of the team at an all-time high," said Minhaj Rahman '19.

At the Middlebury Winterfell, the women earned 108 points to get them third place out of a total field of four teams. The University of Vermont took first place with 232 points, and McGill University placed second with 136 points. Ellie Greenberg '20 secured the first-place spot with a time of 8.39 in the 60-meter dash. In the 200-meter dash, Gretchen McGrath '21 won second place with her time of 26.73. Lucy Lang '19 and Emma Hills '22 participated in the 600-meter run and placed second and fourth, respectively. Lang recorded a time of 1:38.61, while Hills came in at 1:41.68. Helene Rowland '20, Emma Walsh '21 and Julia Lothrop '19 played key roles in Middlebury's success in the shot put event. Rowland claimed first place with a throw of 11.95 meters, Walsh came in fourth with 8.79 meters, and Lothrop followed close behind, taking fifth with 8.78 meters.

With a home crowd behind them, the Panther men placed second out of the total field of four teams with 166 points. The University of Vermont edged the Panthers with a total of 243 points for the first spot. There were several key contributors in the 600-meter run. Jimmy Martinez '19 picked up first place with a time of 1:20.86. William Robertson '21, Arden Coleman '20 and Josh Howard '19 trailed Martinez, coming in third, fourth and fifth, respectively, with times of 1:24.10, 1:24.61 and 1:25.93.

"I was happy with my performance, given that the 600 is longer than my usual event," Martinez stated. "It felt good getting a PR, especially this early in the season."

Jon Perlman '19 and Max Memeger '21 both took home first place in their events. Perlman earned his win with a time of 4:16.66 in the one-mile run. Max Memeger '21 triumphed in the long jump with a jump of 6.16 meters. Rahman placed first in the weight throw with a throw of 18.26 meters, which beat the previous record that he had set just last week.

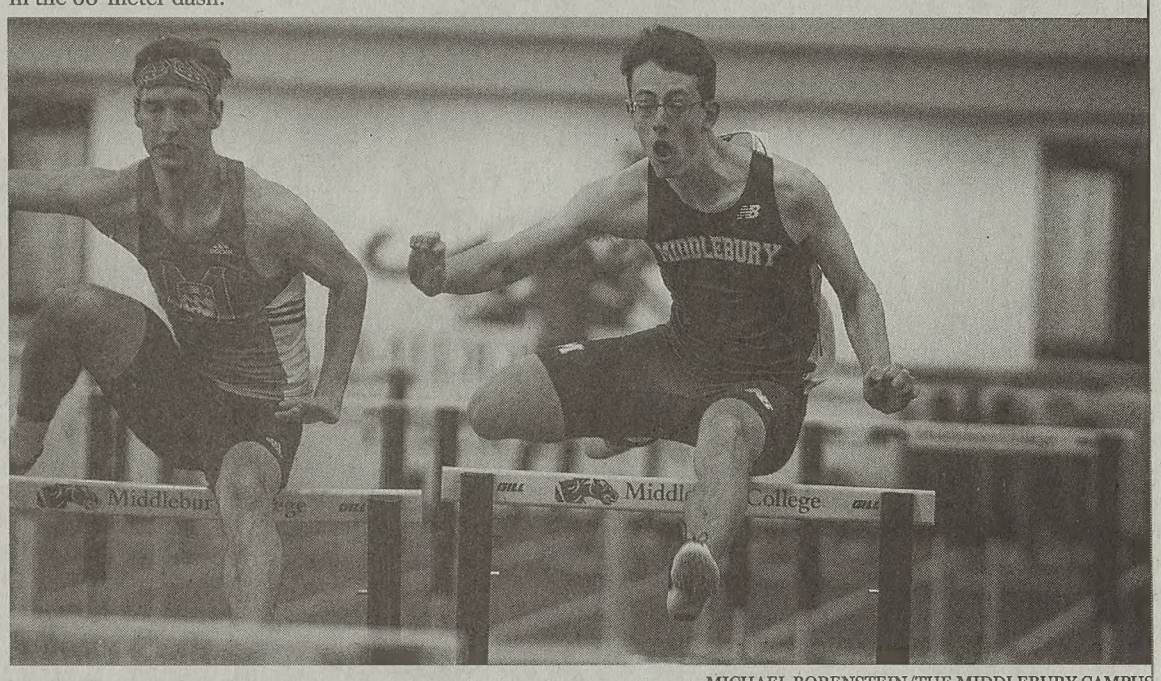
"I was impressed with everyone who raced, especially some of the distance boys who opened their indoor season this week," Martinez said.

The team's next meet will be the Middlebury Invitational, which will take place on Friday, Jan. 25 and Saturday, Jan. 26. Hopefully the Panthers will continue to build upon their success and thrive with another home-field advantage.

With regard to the team's preparation for this meet, Perlman said, "It's still early in the season, so our training will stay pretty intense for the next few weeks."

Martinez added, "The goal for next week is to keep getting in better shape.... I'm very excited for what this team can do."

MICHAEL BORENSTEIN/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS
Ellie Greenberg '20 edges out competition during the Middlebury Winterfell on Saturday, Jan. 19. She placed first in the 60-meter dash.



MICHAEL BORENSTEIN/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS
Ryan Gutheil '22 competes in the 60-meter hurdles.

Men's Basketball Scores Back-to-Back Wins

MICHAEL BORENSTEIN/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS
Max Bosco '21 dribbles past a Keene State player on Saturday, Dec. 1.

By CLAIRE MESSERSMITH
Senior Writer

The Middlebury men's basketball team pulled off its second straight win of the week, knocking off No. 3 Williams in a NESCAC contest this past Saturday, Jan. 19. Middlebury led Williams 47-31 nearly five minutes into the game, and concluded with a 12-point, 80-66 victory.

Co-captain Hilal Dahleh '19 commented on the momentum: "We were confident after beating a good team in Albertus Magnus. We knew we were looked at as the underdogs, but we didn't see it that way and were ready to compete as soon as we got off the bus at Williams."

Jack Farrell '21 was named NESCAC Player of the Week, and led the game in points and assists at 24 and five, respectively.

With eight minutes remaining in the game on Saturday afternoon, Farrell netted five points while Dahleh scored a three to help the Panthers regain their double-digit lead.

"The key to our win on Saturday was also our defense. Williams is one of the best teams in the country, with a lot of weapons, so we had to dig in and play a great defensive game. They have a lot of guys who can light it up from behind the arc, but we were able to hold them to just 2/20 from three just by being there on every catch."

Matt Folger '20 added 17 points, and co-captain Eric McCord '19 led the game in rebounds for Middlebury.

The Panthers will return to action on Sunday, Jan. 27, hosting Trinity at 2 p.m. in Pepin Gymnasium.

"We're going to build off of the big win and prepare hard for Trinity on Sunday. Ultimately the goal is the same as it always is, which is to win the NESCAC and be playing our best basketball once tournament time rolls around."

Middlebury has five games remaining in the regular season before the tournament, and all of them are NESCAC games. The team persists with the goal as it always has been: to win the NESCAC Championship.

Panthers Prove Prowess at UNH Carnival

By CECELIA SCHEUER
Staff Writer

The Middlebury alpine ski team competed in its second carnival race of the season this past weekend at the University of New Hampshire, getting a taste of both heartbreak and sweet victory across the roster. The Panthers finished with 738 points, placing third overall behind Dartmouth (986 points) and Vermont (849 points).

Alpine races were held at Cannon Mountain and concluded on Saturday afternoon. Erik Ardvisson '21 continued to dominate the slopes, taking home second place in the men's slalom event and tying a career-best finish with a time of 1:45.16. Max Stamler '19 finished second for the Panthers, securing the 19th spot in the slalom event with a time of 1:49.6, followed by Pate Campbell '20 in 46th place with a time of 57.76.

"We are so close to putting it all together. The team just needs to stick together and build off of each other's speed," Ardvisson said, looking ahead to the UVM Carnival in two weeks.

With Dartmouth as the Panthers' fiercest competitor, Ardvisson says the team's key to success will depend on "being able to make really good turns no matter the conditions or the pressure."

In the women's giant slalom event, Lucia Bailey '21 turned out the best GS results of her career. Bailey paced the Panthers on Saturday, clinching eighth place after completing the course in a two-run time of 1:54.68. It was another stellar weekend for Madison Lord '21 on the slopes as well. Lord finished second for the Panthers with a time of 1:56.86, putting her in 14th place overall. Caroline Bartlett '19, the final scorer on the women's side, took the 20th spot with a time of 1:57.52.

Bailey spoke to the underrated importance of mental preparation when it comes to racing.

"I think everyone did a great job staying positive, but we need to work on our confidence on race day."

The team will return to action in two weeks at the UVM Carnival. In the meantime, the Panthers plan to focus their training on preparing for Stowe's tough terrain and even tougher competition. Each race has brought the team to new heights. With the consistent mental ability to build off of the inevitable lows, there is nothing that can stand in the Panthers' way.

Women's Squash: Ups & Downs

By EMILY BIAN
Senior Writer

Halfway through a jam-packed Winter Term, the women's squash team is pushing through its season with full force. The Panthers had their last home game of the month this past Thursday against Hamilton, where they swept the team with a 9-0 score, picking up their sixth consecutive win. The 15th-ranked Panthers hit the road to compete against 10th-ranked Brown, in which they faced a devastating loss of 9-0.

In the victory against the Continentals, the Panthers didn't surrender a single game. Natasha Lowitt '20 tallied Middlebury's first point with a win at number six (11-3, 11-3, 11-4) over Eleanor Struthers. Maren Taylor '21 followed close behind, posting a victory at number nine (11-4, 11-7, 11-6). Clinching the match for the Panthers, Victoria Villalba '19 closed it out with an 11-5, 11-0, 14-12 win over Maddie Sakheim at number eight.

First-year Ideal Dowling continued her fantastic season by dominating at No. 2 with a 1-2, 11-0, 11-1 win over Megan Grip. With seven wins and three losses under her belt, Dowling is a force to be reckoned with. Consistently showing strong performances during her first season, she is a player to keep an eye on.

Making their way to Cambridge, the Panthers fell to No. 10 Brown with a score of 9-0 in a match played inside Harvard's Murr Center. In Saturday's setback, Natalie Madden '21 earned a game in her match at number six, while Gwen Davis '22 won two games at number eight.

This weekend, the Panthers will hit the road as they compete against Dickinson, Virginia, and Franklin & Marshall. Following their busy weekend, the team will have nearly two weeks off to gear up for the NESCAC Championships at Trinity starting Friday, Feb. 8.

MICHAEL BORENSTEIN/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS
The women's squash team huddles post-win against Hamilton on Thursday, Jan. 17.

Men's Squash is Still Servin' Heat

By ANN MARTIN SKELLY
Staff Writer

The 18th-ranked Middlebury men's squash team entered this past weekend with a strong five-match winning streak against several top-tier teams before playing against Hamilton and Brown. The Panthers took advantage of this momentum on Thursday at home and claimed a 9-0 victory over Hamilton. John Epley clinched the sweep in a swift three-game win. The team then traveled to Cambridge, Massachusetts, on Saturday to compete against No. 15 Brown University.

Middlebury started the day off strong, going up 4-1 against the Bears, and saw victories from Jacob Ellen '20, Nick Bermingham '20, John Epley '20 and Wiatt Hinton '21. After Brown claimed three more points, rounding the score to 4-4, junior Jack Kagan clinched the match at number four with a five-game comeback after being down 0-2. Returning from studying abroad in the fall, Kagan has secured himself an impressive 6-1 record this winter.

The squad will travel to No. 25 Dickinson College on Friday, and then to Lancaster, Pennsylvania, to play No. 14 UVA on Saturday. On Sunday, the Panthers will play No. 17 Franklin and Marshall. Coach Lewis states that the key to the team's success against these three highly competitive schools is "keeping everyone healthy, motivated and continuing to work on their games. Any opportunity to compete against a school that is close in ranking to us we see as an opportunity to put into play all of the hard work we have already put in."

Keepers of the Ice

BUTCH ATKINS REVEALS THE WARMTH ICE RINK CO-MANAGERS BRING TO COLLEGE ICE HOCKEY PROGRAM

NICOLE HONG/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

By NICOLE HONG
Sports Editor

Butch Atkins arrives at Kenyon Arena around 5:30 a.m. every day to prepare the ice for the figure skaters. He's at the arena until 9:30 p.m., maintaining the rink and making sure our teams have the best ice possible. His first priority is the ice, and then he ensures that the visiting teams feel welcomed and comfortable to come in and lose. We sat down with Atkins to learn more about his role in the community.

Atkins first joined the college hockey program working in the equipment room. He saw that the rink was run with unorganized staff, last-minute switches with only one person staffing the game, and student help to make up for the lack of crew members. Noticing the problem areas, Atkins offered to take over with Stan Pratt in 1981. Atkins and Pratt have been ice rink co-managers since then, managing the Kenyon Arena rink, driving the Zamboni, and organizing the other staff members who work the hockey games.

"They take pride in their preparation," said coach Bill Beaney, who served as the men's ice hockey head coach for 28 years and now coaches men's golf at the college. Atkins and Pratt are always eager to accommodate everyone, from athletes to coaches and even visiting teams. This year, they began making the ice a couple of weeks earlier to help the two hockey teams out. As captain Kamil Tkaczuk '19 of the men's ice hockey team recalls, "[While] other NESCAC teams practice for most of the fall on the ice, we normally begin practicing mid-October, waiting for our ice".

Atkins and Pratt also serve as counselors, teachers and friends.

"[Butch and Stan] are so well-known and respected because of the relationships they have with not only the Middlebury family, but also coaches and players across college hockey," said Beaney. "Having been successful athletes, they've helped many college students and coaches navigate the challenges of competitive sport[s]."

For Jenna Marotta, senior captain of the women's ice hockey team, Atkins is a symbol of comfort amidst the stressful flurry of schoolwork and practice.

"Butch is a unique part of our Middlebury Hockey family. After a long day of classes, rushing down to practice can be quite stressful," she said. "Walking into the rink and being greeted with a warm, familiar face is uplifting and comforting. Butch will always take the time out of his day to stop, chat and listen, which creates a special bond between students and faculty."

Having been a teacher and coach at Mary Hogan Elementary for years before joining the program, bonding with students is natural. In fact, Atkins shared that one of his favorite Midd moments was when "We Are The Champions" blasted over the loudspeaker as "kids who busted their butts" for two hours walked down the hallway with smiles on their faces. Even when the teams are away, walking through hallways of other arenas, Atkins and Pratt are always rooting for them. With a computer on to track the games with livestreams, "fans" should be added to their already-impressive list of roles as program managers, counselors, teachers and friends.

Atkins actively engages with the students off the rink as well. He teaches lessons that can't be learned from playbooks or PDF copies of academic journals. Butch urges them to get involved in other areas of the campus. "If you want them to come to your games, you have to go to their things," Atkins said. On a campus that's so immersed in individual activities and workloads, Atkins speaks truth to students – athletes and non-athletes alike – about community.

Atkins also takes the time to show the athletes his heritage – Vermont. He recounted a time he drove up to Monument Farms with his family, one of the ice hockey captains, and a couple of other athletes to teach them how to hunt. He even planned a special birthday celebration for the captain, surprising her with a small birthday muffin to shoot at. Given the relationships Atkins fosters, it's unsurprising that for some alumni, the first place they come back to is the Zamboni room.

Atkins and Pratt will be honored by the college for their service on Saturday, February 9. The crowd in attendance is sure to thank them for the warmth they've brought to this icy campus.

NICOLE HONG/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

At Middlebury since 1981, Butch Atkins currently manages the ice rink with Stan Pratt.

NICOLE HONG/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

Butch Atkins drives the Zamboni during a hockey practice.

Keeping up with Kim

WOMEN'S SOCCER COACH DISCUSSES COACHING, TEAM SUCCESS AND GROUP VALUES

By GRIFFIN HALL
Contributing Writer

MICHAEL BORENSTEIN/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

The women's soccer team celebrates after winning the NCAA Regional Final on Sunday, Nov. 11. Head coach Peter Kim places emphasis on academics and community service in his coaching philosophy.

Two days before the start of the 2004 women's soccer training season, then-assistant coach Peter Kim learned of an abrupt coaching staff change that left the team without a head. After only a year on the Middlebury coaching staff, Kim became the prime candidate for the head position.

Just over a year before, Kim had been working at a youth nonprofit, continuing a track he had set for himself years earlier when he pursued and earned an M.A. in public administration. He wanted to provide consulting services to nonprofits, helping them to run more like highly effective businesses. But after 10 years in the nonprofit world, Kim wasn't enthused. In addition to his day job at the nonprofit, Kim had founded and was running a youth club in central Vermont, Capital Soccer. "I felt like I was doing more for kids after work than in my day job," he explained. He decided to leave the nonprofit and took time to regroup.

It was the summer of 2002 when Doug Holly, a friend of Kim's and coach of the Vergennes High School soccer team, called Kim. Holly informed him that Diane Boettcher, then coach of Middlebury, was looking for an assistant coach. Kim had no desire to coach college at all, but Holly convinced him to go down to Middlebury to meet with Boettcher. Soon after arriving on campus, Kim realized he had the potential to make an impact on the team. He took the job.

Coach Kim's eagerness to jump into leading practices paid off when Boettcher left unexpectedly in 2004. "The players didn't even know [of the staff change] when they got here; they were expecting Boettcher," he explained. Despite this rapid transition, Kim felt obligated to to maintain the level of success of the previous few years; Boettcher had led the Panthers to the dominant position in the NESCAC in 2000, then second and third places for 2001 and 2002, respectively.

Additionally, when Kim joined, there hadn't been a long-standing coach in the position for most of the team's history. Coaches were overextended because of the three-sport coach model where they would head a different team each season of the year, leaving very little room for program growth. This left them with no offseason to help train their athletes, let alone develop training and game strategies.

Kim was the first women's soccer coach to shun this model, instead devoting a significant amount of time and energy in the offseason to better develop the team. This included making workout packets, conducting bi-weekly training sessions and developing the schedule for the next season. Given more time to settle into the job, Kim found himself loving the position and eager to channel his best coaching ability.

The most noticeable development in Division III athletics during Kim's tenure, however, has been the explosive growth of recruitment effort made by both teams and prospective players. Approached by more than 800 athletes a year, Kim communicates with each player individually and devotes an extraordinary amount of time seeing her play, ideally multiple times, before "the moment of truth," when she decides whether to apply to Middlebury early decision. Kim was quick to criticize this American recruiting system. "It leads kids to make their college choice for the wrong reason. They wait to get tapped on the shoulder by the coach on high who dubs them worthy of playing for them, when it should be all about the student choosing the school that's right for her," Kim said. Nowadays, it isn't rare for him to receive emails from sixth- and seventh-graders proclaiming their allegiance to the Panthers. "It's terribly unhealthy," he frowned. "In what world would that make sense?"

Kim's skepticism of this "elite" mentality extends into his coaching philosophy. While an undergrad at UVM, Kim sustained a devastating concussion that pulled him from the sport early in his career. From then on, he had to focus exclusively on a doubled academic course to graduate on time. This profoundly influenced his current emphasis on athletics as part of the greater picture of college life: "Injuries can happen, and if that happens and suddenly you stop loving the school, then you're probably at the wrong place." In this way, Kim's philosophy is perfectly tailored to the Middlebury student. "When I was in college, academics were not prioritized. You got it done to the extent that it was important to you. Middlebury kids, to their credit, love school, and then they come down and play at a Division I level." He cited how one of his goaltenders played a major role in a theater production last semester and smiled with pride. "That's a testament to who you guys are as students here."

Kim's overarching coaching philosophy is paired with a core set of team values, all of which rolled off his tongue with sharp familiarity. First up was academics. Second, he said, "We play the game; we believe in the technical game and to keep it on the ground." Next on the list was community service. "I am very proud that we are one of the leaders in community service on this campus. We're spoiled rotten here, and we try to maintain a culture of gratitude because we are just so lucky." Finally, with a twinkling smile, he mentioned the family culture of his team. "Class lines are blurred almost to the point of being erased, and students become family with players three years older and younger than them. It's that chemistry, which is difficult to explain, that is the central aspect of the team. If we didn't have that, we wouldn't be successful."

Upon being asked what success meant to him, Kim, unsurprisingly, presented a long list. "This year was a success because we made it all the way to the finals, *and* we won the state championship, *and* we played beautifully, *and* we won the NESCAC Championship, *and* we're a family, *and* we're killing it in the classroom, *and* we're leading the campus in community service. I think that kind of sums up what Middlebury is about: the word *and*."